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Edited by AUSTIN HARRISON

JUNE 1915

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The Dark House — Walter de la Mare
A Fragment — The Late James Elroy Flecker
My Childhood (i) — Maxim Gorki
The Minotaur — R. Ellis Roberts

THE WAR OF LIBERATION

From a Journal (ii) — May Sinclair
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Weapons and Tactics — Lisle March Phillipps
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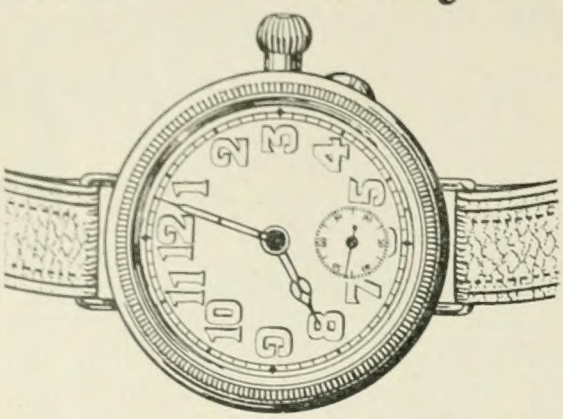

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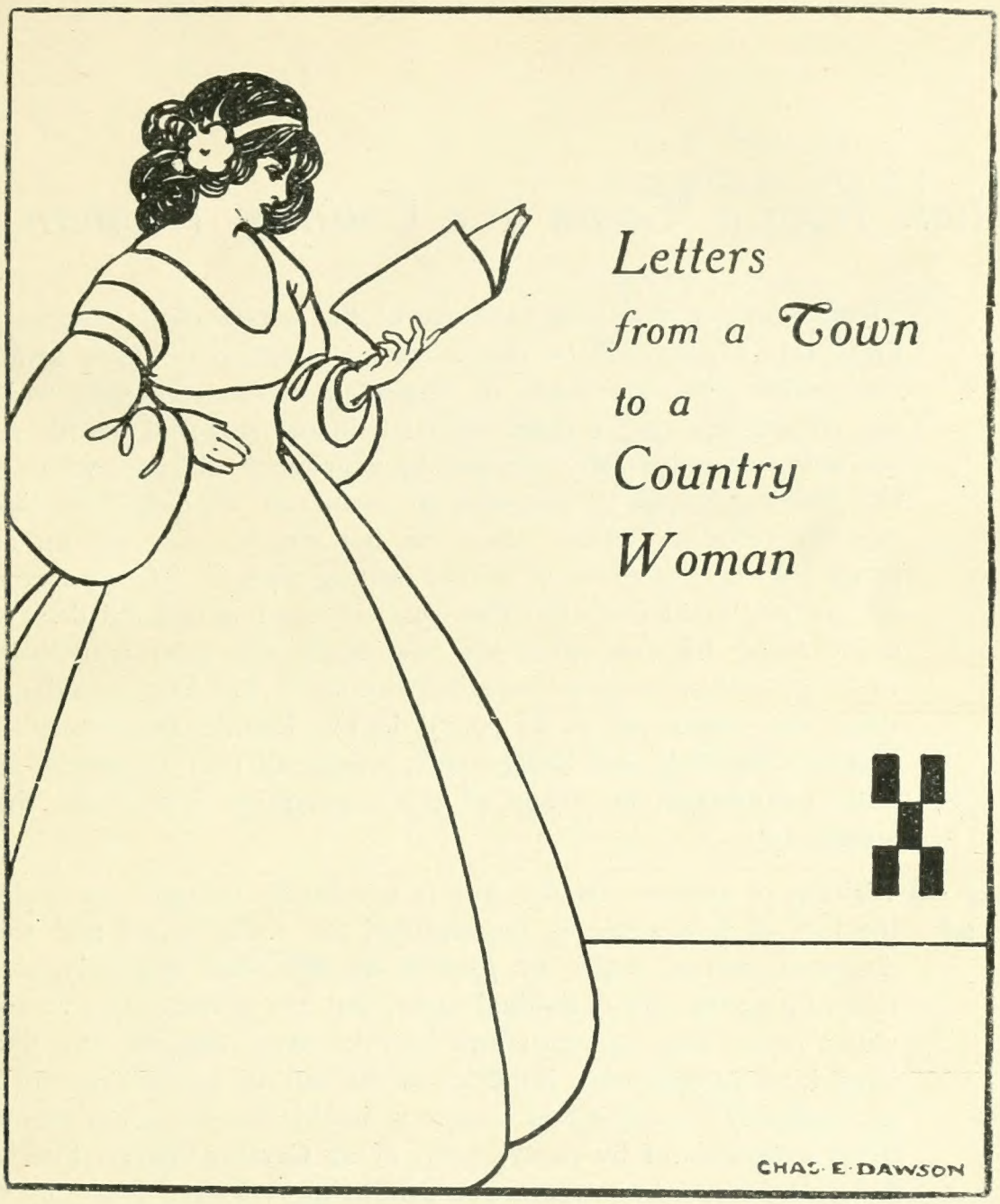

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Letters from a Town to a Country Woman

THERE seems little doubt that one of the outstanding features of dress this season will be the universal adoption of those smart, serviceable top-coats made of Shantung or Tussore silk, which are already creating a mild sensation in the sartorial world, and are being so universally adopted by women of all ages, who find this particular type of garment so useful for slipping over light summer *toilettes*, which, since the hot weather has set in, are being sold by the dozen at all the leading shops. The new coats are cut and fashioned after the most picturesque tailored designs, many being trimmed with the new black silk sash waist-belts, which give them such a dressy appearance. The best selection of these new coats are to be found in the Mantle Department at Messrs. Marshall and Snelgrove's, where all that is newest and most picturesque in wraps of this description first make their appearance.

Summer Frocks at War Prices

¶ Writing of summer frocks, one is constantly brought up against the fact of how great is the demand for really smart and well-designed cotton, *voile,* or *foulard* dresses that not only show real originality and individual taste, but are priced at so reasonable a figure that one can afford to order more than one at a time. This kind of costume, hitherto so difficult to procure except in the ordinary "ready-made" variety, is this season being made a great speciality of by Betty, Ltd., of 22 Gerrard Street, Shaftesbury Avenue, where the most delightful *toilettes,* made in the firm's own workshops, and fashioned of the latest and most up-to-date fabrics, are now to be bought for ridiculously small prices. Without being in the least *outré* or eccentric, these smart little frocks are thoroughly up-to-date and have all the charm of the latest Parisian *chic*; while day and evening *toilettes* of exceptionally smart design are also to be had marked at such extremely moderate prices that they supply a felt want during War-time.

The Return of the Picture Hat

¶ Picture hats will this season return to popular favour, for no less an authority than Paquin, of Dover Street, has decreed that big hats are to be as fashionable in the future as small shapes have been during the past. The new Paquin hats, needless to say, express the latest note of fashion, and, what is more, they are as picturesque as they are smart, and eminently becoming to

A Note on
BOOTS & SHOES
by GISÈLE

TO be well shod is a joy. I like shoes or boots of good shape, fashioned of fine leather, or beautiful fabric, which are comfortable in wear — and so do most women. One is apt to think of the perfect shoe as a dream, but it is a reality at Marshall's.

A new model designed to meet the demand created by the short full skirt. The uppers are of white cloth and the golosh of *Navy Blue Kid*.
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women of all ages. Made somewhat after the broad-brimmed sailor shapes with low crowns, these in many cases show thin frills of net laid flat over the top of the brim, seeming to carry out the frill and flounce effect so popular just now.

The new hats, which should be seen if one is to be able to fully appreciate their charms, are trimmed with flowers (or light osprey and paradise mounts) arranged in a wholly novel manner, and they are to be had in many beautiful new colour schemes arranged with that artistic skill and taste which has done so much to build up the reputation of this firm which leads the world of fashion to-day.

The Charm of the New Sports Coats

¶ Writing of clothes for summer wear, one cannot ignore the insistent charms of the now ubiquitous sports coats, which grow in beauty and in elegance each successive season. This year Messrs. Debenham and Freebody, who so undoubtedly lead the way where these garments are concerned, are making a speciality of a delightful sports coat fashioned of a heavy quality *crêpe de Chine,* which makes up into the most becoming coat, suitable either for indoor or outdoor wear. Indeed, nothing is more *chic* or up-to-date for wearing over thin *ninon* or chiffon blouses than these exceedingly graceful coatees, which are modelled on such good lines that they have a marvellously slendering effect, and can be worn in the lightest and most brilliant colours even by women who are inclined to be stout.

Sash Draperies for Silk and Wool Sports Coats

¶ Other extremely attractive novelties in the new sports coats introduced by this firm include some very smart hand-knitted coats made with the new full basques, held in place by deep swathed black silk sashes, and finished off with a smart coloured silk flare collar. These coats look extremely well for tennis or garden-party wear, and are one of those real novelties which are sure to become popular. Another attractive knitted coat is made of artificial silk, with a high Napoleon collar and big pointed revers and cuffs edged with a contrasting colour, and a sash to match the edge. Such a coat made in white silk with a narrow black border and a black silk sash is very *chic*, while similar coats made in black silk with a white border are also to be had. For house wear, Messrs. Debenham and Freebody are also introducing a new thin mottled silk coat of such fine texture that it is no thicker than an ordinary silk stocking. These coats are delightful for wear over ordinary thin *crêpe* or *lingerie* blouses.

Coats and Skirts for Summer Wear

¶ The right kind of outdoor costume is becoming more and more of a problem as the warm weather sets in; for there is no ignoring the fact that, in spite of coats and skirts still being the most popular form of *toilette* for wear on all occasions, everyone is beginning to be more than a little weary of the blue serge or covert coating which has been worn by every

other woman during the past six months. To meet this want, Messrs. Hughes and Starnes, the well-known costumiers, of 63 South Molton Street, are this season making a speciality of picturesque Tussore silk coats and skirts, trimmed with collars and revers of wide silk braid of the same colour. The effect of this simple trimming is that it brings a quite ordinary coat and skirt thoroughly up-to-date and imparts a strikingly *chic* effect.

Fashioned with picturesque little coatees, allied to skirts measuring anything from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 yards round the scalloped hem, which is bound with the same braid as trims the coat, these particular costumes will be found to supply a felt want both for town and for country wear. There is no doubt regarding the excellence of cut and fit of these costumes, for this firm have built up a sound reputation, both for their cut and the excellence of the materials which they supply for day and evening gowns, as well as for coats and skirts, which are moderately priced and wear indefinitely.

A New Complexion Cream

¶ With the advent of the summer it is good news to hear of a new face cream, which is decidedly superior to anything yet put upon the market. This is very smooth to use, is very refreshing, and does wonders in preserving the skin against sunburn, freckles, and other summer blemishes. What is of utmost importance is the fact that each pot of the new cream is sold with a guarantee that it will not promote the growth of hair on the face, while it possesses such wonderfully cleansing properties that it is used by all the best beauty doctors and specialists. For use before motoring, or after any violent exercise, the new cream, which is made up and sold by Mrs. Aston, of 38 Beauchamp Place, Brompton Road, cannot be excelled; already it has been demonstrated that it can be used without fear of the skin becoming sodden, while its daily use is a sure preventative against wrinkles. What is of importance to so many women is that the new cream is not expensive to purchase, for it can be bought in small as well as large quantities.

A Novelty in Country Hats

¶ The right kind of hat to wear with summer coats and skirts and smart little cotton frocks has hitherto been anything but easy to find. This year, however, that well-known firm Messrs. Woodrow, of Piccadilly, are introducing some becomingly shaped Leghorn hats, turned up slightly at one side and lined underneath with fine black chiffon velvet, a wide velvet bow and band of the same colour completing the sole trimming. It is difficult to describe the charm of these hats, which are very light to wear and so smart in their simplicity that there is no doubt whatever that they will be extremely popular this year.

Already they are taking the place of the everlasting Panama, which can, however, be bought at this shop, trimmed in a similar manner, with a black velvet lining and a large black velvet bow or rosette.

Nosegay Brooches

¶ With these and all other types of coats and skirts one finds little nosegay bunches of real or artificial flowers are universally worn, a fad of fashion which has spread considerably of late and is fast becoming a popular rage. In connection with this, one finds a revival of the long bar brooch, which is the only thing that really keeps these floral trimmings in place. The most attractive of these are to be found at the Parisian Diamond Company's premises in Regent Street, where they are to be had made of white brilliants or set with imitation diamonds and rubies, arranged either in plain bars or in light-looking scroll designs. Either of these are extremely attractive and command a ready sale at the present moment, for, in spite of many imitators, no one has ever yet succeeded in making such real-looking diamonds and precious stones as this particular firm, no one save the most experienced expert being able to detect the difference between their wonderful imitation pearls and the real variety, which represent a small fortune.

Flower Boxes

¶ Coming to matters concerning household affairs, it is surprising to note how many well-filled window-boxes have made their appearance in London of late. The most beautiful of these come from the Floral Depôt at 47 Baker Street, W., which is so famous for their speciality "Flowergrams," which have created such a sensation this season, and have made a choice nosegay or basket of beautifully cut and arranged flowers the favourite gift of the moment. These flowergrams are despatched to any part of the town or country on receipt of a telephone or telegraph message, and, although by no means costly, they fill a felt want by many would-be donors of birthday or wedding gifts. The same taste and originality of arrangement which has always been displayed over gifts of this description is also displayed by this firm in their arrangement of window-boxes, so that customers may feel quite safe in despatching their orders direct, and leaving the selection and arrangement of their boxes to these expert florists, who will also undertake table and ballroom decorations, either on a large or a small scale.

To Make The Deaf Hear

¶ In spite of the fact that so many cumbersome inventions have been put upon the market to enable the deaf to hear, so far little success has attended such experiments, and it has remained for the smallest of all instruments to prove the most efficient in this respect. Known as the "Stolz Electrophone," and sold at 8 St. Martin's Place, Trafalgar Square, this can be worn over the ear and hidden under the hair, if the wearer desires, and proves a

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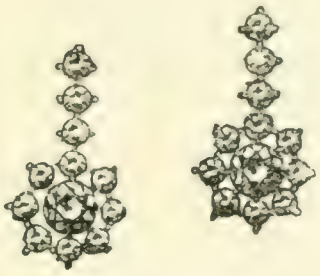

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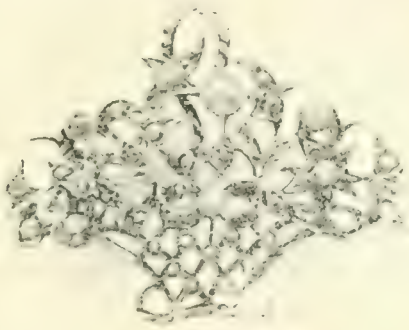

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very great comfort to numerous deaf people throughout the country, who up to now have not been able to participate in general conversation. What is a very great boon to many deaf people is the fact that those who wish to test the benefits of the new invention in order to see if it suits their particular case can arrange to have a trial of this instrument before they need purchase the same.

A Book on Life Assurance

¶ The Canada Life Insurance Company, of 15 King Street, Cheapside, has just issued a very comprehensive little pamphlet, which will be sent free to all who apply for the same. This gives a vast amount of valuable information concerning every branch of life insurance, and also deals with the question of annuities for both men and women, all the facts being so clearly set out that the subject is made clear even to those who possess the haziest ideas on this all-important subject.

A New Cure for Gout and Obesity

¶ Although medical matters do not, as a rule, find a place in an article of this kind, it may interest many readers to know of a new effervescent salt, which not only acts as a cure for gout and obesity, but all manner of other ills of the same kind, these being dealt with in an interesting little booklet issued by Heppell and Co., of 164 Piccadilly, and which may prove a valuable guide to health to many readers.

The Best Summer Hair Lotion

¶ Several inquiries have come to hand regarding the best treatment for hair during the hot weather, so that it does not become scurfy or moist and lank from the heat. Mrs. Devinn, of 166 Sloane Street, who makes a speciality of advising ladies on such matters, is just now selling a very invigorating hair tonic that not only does a great deal toward preserving the natural colour of the hair, but which so strengthens the scalp that there is little fear of it becoming relaxed during the hottest weather, and so causing the hair to fall out. Mrs. Devinn's treatment of the hair is purely scientific, all her lotions and tonics being made up from a doctor's receipt, unlike a great many quack and much-advertised hair tonics, they really do do the hair good, and work wonders in restoring and keeping it bright and beautifully glossy.

MARY MARSH.

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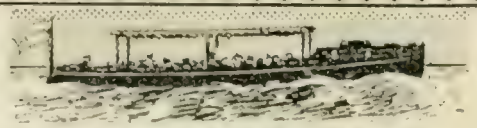

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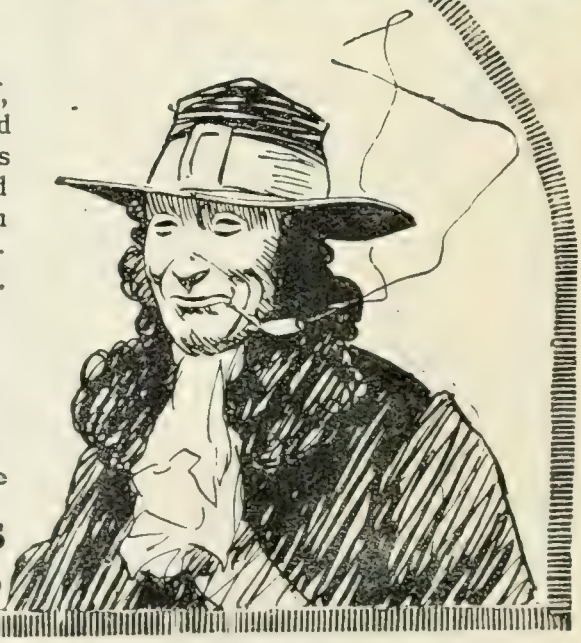

THE
ENGLISH REVIEW
JUNE, 1915

A Ballad of the War

By Lord Latymer

THUNDER not back their words of hate,
  But thunder with your guns;
Press on, press on to Berlin's gate,
  The Paris of the Huns.

They first deceived themselves and then
  The whole wide world, except
A handful of brave British men,
  Who woke while others slept.

"Arouse, arise," they cried, "beware
  The Prussians' cultured creed;
World-masters they would be; prepare!
  For you will soon have need."

But Britain was absorbed in trade,
  In politics and sports;
What foeman can the land invade
  Whose navy guards her ports?

She thought herself secure; she scorned
  The warning of her sons,
Whose wise experience should have warned
  Against the wiles of Huns.

She listened to the lawyer crew,
  Themselves the men of wiles,
Who covered up the thing they knew,
  Or did not know, with smiles.

Until there came a day at last
  When she was brought to bay;
Her honour hung upon the cast
  Of what she dared to say.

Thank God, the honest word she said;
  Her Empire heard the call;
The coward hopes of some were sped
  Who wished to see her fall:

Fall from the high estate of those
  Sworn enemies of wrong,
Who fight for friends against their foes,
  The weak against the strong.

St. Andrew and St. Patrick scanned
  St. George's flag unfurled
Against the Dragon who had planned
  To swallow up the world.

The skirling pipes of Scotland blew,
  Widespread the war's alarms,
And far across the ocean flew
  Great Britain's call to arms.

Ireland renewed her fighting fame,
  All civil conflict past,
In strong array her young men came
  From Dublin and Belfast.

Australia heard the bugles sound,
  And Canada replied;*
New Zealand, too, by blood was bound
  To fight by Britain's side.

* Implying also Newfoundland.

Then India's ancient land was stirred;
From Cashmere to Mysore,
From Sind to Bengal's Bay she heard
The summons to the war.

Although diverse in blood and creed,
She marched the foe to face,
And proved herself in Britain's need
Of one imperial race.

But Prussia sent her armies forth;
With all her subject States
She crossed the frontiers, South and North,
And broke the Belgian gates;

In spite of her own hand and seal,
In solemn compact given,
That never by invader's steel
Should Belgium's gates be riven.

Through Flanders then with fire and sword,
No lust nor loot forbid,
She rushed; and all the things abhorred
Of God and man she did.

She swept like storm from town to town;
Cathedral, Palace, Hall,
Each pile of beauty and renown,
Before the whirlwind fall.

No altar, crucifix, or shrine
Was sacred in her eyes;
Three things alone she deemed divine—
Herself, her lust, and lies.

Then did the Belgians drink the cup
Of death and deep despair;
Their homes in flame were swallowed up
And all their land laid bare.

Trading and labouring men were haled
To death or worse duress,
And mothers for their children wailed,
And babes were motherless.

Daughters were ravished, fathers made
To kneel before the foe
That outraged them; not soon shall fade
The memory of their woe!

Old men were slaughtered, women too;
Their bodies were defamed;
The Huns did all that devils do
And did it unashamed.

For young and old was no escape;
The Huns destroyed the land,
And murder, pillage, arson, rape
Marched with them hand in hand.

But still the Belgians and their King
Like heroes fought the foe,
And eagles wounded in the wing
Are forced to fly more slow.

No nation in unequal fight
Of braver deeds can boast,
Alone they stood against the might
Of all the Prussian host,

Till Britain's forces o'er the sea
Came, guarded by her fleet;
Too few to win a victory,
They won a great retreat!

For though the surging Prussians drove
From Mons to Compiègne
The British Army, yet they strove
To conquer it in vain;

Yet ill had fared the western world
  Had Russia dealt no blow;
Her onslaught, chivalrously hurled,
  Distraught the boastful foe;

So, when the French made fierce attack,
  With Britons, side by side,
They forced the Prussians back and back
  And turned the threatening tide.

If Britain then had had the men,
  A million in the field,
The Huns' retreat had been defeat
  And death, or else to yield;

But Britain never knows her day;
  Locked in her little isles,
She lets the little things have sway
  At which the great world smiles.

Yet now the foe their match had found,
  Though matched at dreadful cost;
Like moles they burrowed underground,
  The road to Paris lost.

Then did the British and the French,
  From Alsace to the coast,
With gun to gun and trench to trench
  Hold back the Prussian host;

But not without the Russians' aid;
  They too held Prussia fast;
And little Servia from Belgrade
  The Austrian Army cast;

While still the British Navy kept
  The ocean channels free,
And like a watch-dog never slept
  At sentry o'er the sea.

Then grew the Prussian Eagle mad;
  Where was his promised Day?
Why were not Paris, Petrograd,
  And London now his prey?

German professors raised a cry
  And waved astonished hands
That anyone should dare defy
  Great Prussia's high commands;

And grave philosophers declared,
  With spluttering and with spleen,
That Britain was for war prepared:
  How villainous and mean!

The Kaiser called upon his God;
  What kind of God was he?
The Christ who once the Garden trod
  Of "pale Gethsemane"?

More like, alas, a Fiend Divine,
  A horrible Afreet
Or Moloch, asking blood for wine
  And babies' flesh for meat.

For now their harpy aeroplanes
  Like demon falcons flew,
And dropped their bombs on country lanes
  And country women slew;

While cruisers that the mists conceal
  From Britain's North Sea guard,
Along the Yorkshire headlands steal
  And helpless towns bombard.

A piteous sight it was to see
  The shells begin to rain;
Mothers and children at their knee
  And agèd folk were slain;

And many a home beloved by those
  Whose infants there were born
Was crumbled into dust by foes
  Who all compassion scorn.

Shame be to those who have command,
  To those who serve them shame,
For deeds of murder done on land
  And deeds at sea the same!

Unwarned, the merchantmen go down
  And sailors find their graves;
Oh, long shall be their foul renown
  Who riot o'er the waves.

Then hoist the British flag on high
  And nail it to the mast;
Let all the world that sees it fly
  Know Britain roused at last.

If e'er it flew for power or fame,
  Not now for them it flies,
But to keep fair her ancient name
  Of faith to brave allies;

To keep her honour clean and bright,
  Her kingdom undefiled
By proud oppressor's foot; to fight
  For home and wife and child;

To help to set the whole world free
  From Prussia's iron hand;
To sweep the pirates from the sea,
  The brigands from the land.

Now let the subtle tongue be still,
  The crafty counsel cease;
War must be waged with all our will,
  Before we talk of peace.

Men of plain mind shall rule the day,
  Not men of crooked thought;
'Tis time to argue of the fray,
  When once the fray is fought.

Let all who think (as think they must,
  If sturdy sense not fail)
That Britain's cause is right and just,
  Take heed that it prevail.

Ah, let imagination paint,
  If paint it truly can,
The advent of the Prussian Saint
  To teach uncultured Man!

Could he succeed in conquering France,
  And then his way could wing
And make on Britain his advance,
  What gospel would he bring?

He holds the Faith of Violence,
  In force he puts his trust;
If even a child give him offence,
  That child must bite the dust.

Though hard such frenzy to believe,
  It is not hard of proof;
Go, see where Rheims and Louvain grieve
  For homes without a roof,

For churches now but funeral pyres,
  Proud splendours built in vain,
For ravished women and grey sires
  And reverend pastors slain;

For babes and children too, bereft
  Of all that makes life sweet,
And if not massacred, yet left
  To die in field or street.

To repetition all comes round,
  And Prussian deeds the same,
Until the whole wide world resound
  For ever with their shame.

Though war be war, if war must be,
  With all its waste and woe,
'Twas waged with magnanimity
  An hundred years ago;

Nor yet was chivalry unknown,
  When France bowed down her head
To Prussia, and the land was sown
  With all her honoured dead.

But if the Huns on British shore
  Should land (which God forbid)
They'd do to us as much or more
  Than they to Belgium did.

Picture their deeds and tears shall start
  From every honest eye,
And horror in each honest heart
  In execration cry:

"Though all the flower of life we lose,
  Our dearest and our best,
This is the way, the way we choose,
  To bring us peace and rest:

"To beat this monster to his knees,
  And bind him with a chain,
Lest he and his barbarities
  Should plague the world again;

"Lest he should spread his noisome growth
  To hide us from the sun,
And we, rewarded by our sloth,
  Lose all our fathers won.

"On Freedom's altar was their blood
Poured out, and not in vain,
Unless we let the Prussian flood
Wash out that sacred stain;

"Unless, forgetting old renown,
We cease brave days to greet,
When Drake set sail from Plymouth town,
To fight the Spanish fleet;

"When that great victory Nelson won
With his own death was sealed,
When back came conquering Wellington
From Waterloo's red field;

"Such heroes must we oft recall,
That we may keep alive
A flame to animate us all,
That we like them may strive;

"Strive that our goodly heritage
Be handed to our sons,
Secure from the rapacious rage
And ruthless rule of Huns."

The Dark House

By Walter de la Mare

See this House, how dark it is
Beneath its vast-boughed trees.
Not one trembling leaflet cries
To that Watcher in the skies—
"Remove, remove thy searching gaze,
Innocent, of Heaven's ways,
Brood not, Moon, so wildly bright,
On secrets hidden from sight."

"Secrets," sighs the night-wind,
"Vacancy is all I find;
Every keyhole I have made
Wail a summons, faint and sad,
No voice ever answers me,
Only vacancy."
"Once, once . . . " the cricket shrills,
And far and near the quiet fills
With its tiny voice, and then
Hush falls again.

Mute shadows creeping slow
Mark how the hours go,
Every stone is mouldering slow,
And the least winds that blow
Some minutest atom shake,
Some fretting ruin make
In roof and walls. How black it is
Beneath these thick-boughed trees!

A Fragment

By the late James Elroy Flecker

O pouring westering streams
Shouting that I have leapt the mountain bar,
Down curve on curve my journey's white way gleams—
My road along the river of return.

I know the countries where the white moons burn,
And heavy star on star
Dips on the pale and crystal desert hills.
I know the river of the sun that fills
With founts of gold the lakes of Orient sky.

. . . . . .

And I have heard a voice of broken seas
And from the cliffs a cry.
Ah still they learn those cave-eared Cyclades
The Tritons friendly or his fearful horn
And why the deep sea-bells but seldom chime,
And how those waves and with what spell-swept rhyme
In years of mourning on a summer's morn
Whispering round his castle on the coast
Lured young Achilles from his haunted sleep
And drave him out to dive beyond those deep
Dim purple windows of the empty swell
His ivory body flitting like a ghost
Over the holes where flat blind fishes dwell
All to embrace his mother, thronèd in her shell.

My Childhood

By Maxim Gorki

I.

In a narrow, darkened room, my father, dressed in a white and unusually long garment, lay on the floor under the window. The toes of his bare feet were curiously extended, and the fingers of the still hands, which rested peacefully upon his breast, were curved; his merry eyes were tightly closed by the black discs of two copper coins; the light had gone out of his still face, and I was frightened by the ugly way he showed his teeth.

My mother, only half clad in a red petticoat, knelt and combed my father's long, soft hair, from his brow to the nape of his neck, with the same black comb which I loved to use to tear the rind of water-melons; she talked unceasingly in her low, husky voice, and it seemed as if her swollen eyes must be washed away by the incessant flow of tears.

Holding me by the hand was my grandmother, who had a big, round head, large eyes, and a nose like a sponge —a dark, tender, wonderfully interesting person. She also was weeping, and her grief formed a fitting accompaniment to my mother's, as, shuddering the while, she pushed me towards my father; but I, terrified and uneasy, obstinately tried to hide myself against her. I had never seen grown-up people cry before, and I did not understand the words which my grandmother uttered again and again:

"Say good-bye to daddy. You will never see him any more. He is dead—before his time."

I had been very ill, had only just left my bed in fact, and I remember perfectly well that at the beginning of my illness my father used to bustle merrily about me. Then he suddenly disappeared and his place was taken by my grandmother, a stranger to me.

"Where did you come from?" I asked her.

"From up there, from Nijni," she answered; "but I did not walk here, I came by boat. One does not walk on water, you little imp."

This was ludicrous, incomprehensible, and untrue; upstairs there lived a bearded, gaudy Persian, and in the cellar an old, yellow Kalmuck who sold sheepskins. One could get upstairs by riding on the banisters, or if one fell that way, one could roll. I knew this by experience. But where was there room for water? It was all untrue and delightfully muddled.

"And why am I a little imp?"

"Why? Because you are so noisy," she said, laughing.

She spoke sweetly, merrily, melodiously, and from the very first day I made friends with her; all I wanted now was for her to make haste and take me out of that room.

My mother pressed me to her; her tears and groans created in me a strange feeling of disquietude. It was the first time I had seen her like this. She had always appeared a stern woman of few words; neat, glossy, and strongly built like a horse, with a body of almost savage strength, and terribly strong arms. But now she was swollen and palpitating, and utterly desolate. Her hair, which was always coiled so neatly about her head, with her large, gaily trimmed cap, was tumbled about her bare shoulders, fell over her face, and part of it which remained plaited, trailed across my father's sleeping face. Although I had been in the room a long time she had not once looked at me; she could do nothing but dress my father's hair, sobbing and choking with tears the while.

Presently some swarthy gravediggers and a soldier peeped in at the door.

The latter shouted angrily:

"Clear out now! Hurry up!"

The window was curtained by a dark shawl, which the wind inflated like a sail. I knew this because one day my father had taken me out in a sailing-boat, and without warning there had come a peal of thunder. He laughed, and holding me against his knees, cried, "It is nothing. Don't be frightened, Luke!"

Suddenly my mother threw herself heavily on the floor, but almost at once turned over on her back, dragging her hair in the dust; her impassive, white face had become

livid, and showing her teeth like my father, she said in a terrible voice, "Close the door! . . . Alexis . . . go away!"

Thrusting me on one side, grandmother rushed to the door crying:

"Friends! Don't be frightened; don't interfere, but go away, for the love of Christ. This is not cholera but childbirth. . . . I beg of you to go, good people!"

I hid myself in a dark corner behind a box, and thence I saw how my mother writhed upon the floor, panting and gnashing her teeth; and grandmother, kneeling beside her, talked lovingly and hopefully.

"In the name of the Father and of the Son . . . ! Be patient, Varusha! Holy Mother of God! . . . Our Defence . . . !"

I was terrified. They crept about on the floor close to my father, touching him, groaning and shrieking, and he remained unmoved and actually smiling. This creeping about on the floor lasted a long time; several times my mother stood up, only to fall down again, and grandmother rolled in and out of the room like a large, black, soft ball. All of a sudden a child cried.

"Thank God!" said grandmother. "It is a boy!" And she lighted a candle.

I must have fallen asleep in the corner, for I remember nothing more.

The next impression which my memory retains is a deserted corner in a cemetery on a rainy day. I am standing by a slippery mound of sticky earth and looking into the pit wherein they have thrown the coffin of my father. At the bottom there is a quantity of water, and there are also frogs, two of which have even jumped on to the yellow lid of the coffin.

At the graveside were myself, grandmother, a drenched sexton, and two cross gravediggers with shovels.

We were all soaked with the warm rain which fell in fine drops like glass beads.

"Fill in the grave," commanded the sexton, moving away.

Grandmother began to cry, covering her face with a corner of the shawl which she wore for a head-covering. The gravediggers, bending nearly double, began to fling

the lumps of earth on the coffin rapidly, striking the frogs, which were leaping against the sides of the pit, down to the bottom.

"Come along, Lenia," said grandmother, taking hold of my shoulder; but having no desire to depart, I wriggled out of her hands.

"What next, O Lord?" grumbled grandmother, partly to me, and partly to God, and she remained for some time silent, with her head drooping dejectedly.

The grave was filled in, yet still she stood there, till the gravediggers threw their shovels to the ground with a resounding clangour, and a breeze suddenly arose and died away, scattering the rain-drops; then she took me by the hand and led me to a church some distance away, by a path which lay between a number of dark crosses.

"Why don't you cry?" she asked, as we came away from the burial-ground. "You ought to cry."

"I don't want to," was my reply.

"Well, if you don't want to, you need not," she said gently.

This greatly surprised me, because I seldom cried, and when I did it was more from anger than sorrow; moreover, my father used to laugh at my tears, while my mother would exclaim, "Don't you dare to cry!"

After this we rode in a droshky through a broad but squalid street, between rows of houses which were painted dark red.

As we went along, I asked grandmother, "Will those frogs ever be able to get out?"

"Never!" she answered. "God bless them!"

I reflected that my father and my mother never spoke so often or so familiarly of God.

. . . . . .

A few days later my mother and grandmother took me aboard a steamboat, where we had a tiny cabin.

My little brother Maxim was dead, and lay on a table in the corner, wrapped in white and wound about with red tape. Climbing on to the bundles and trunks I looked out of the porthole, which seemed to me exactly like the eye of a horse. Muddy, frothy water streamed unceasingly down the pane. Once it dashed against the glass with

such violence that it splashed me, and I involuntarily jumped back to the floor.

"Don't be afraid," said grandmother, and lifting me lightly in her kind arms, restored me to my place on the bundles.

A grey, moist fog brooded over the water; from time to time a shadowy land was visible in the distance, only to be obscured again by the fog and the foam. Everything about us seemed to vibrate, except my mother who, with her hands folded behind her head, leaned against the wall fixed and still, with a face that was grim and hard as iron, and as expressionless. Standing thus, mute, with closed eyes, she appeared to me as an absolute stranger. Her very frock was unfamiliar to me.

More than once grandmother said to her softly, "Varia, won't you have something to eat?"

My mother neither broke the silence nor stirred from her position.

Grandmother spoke to me in whispers, but to my mother she spoke aloud, and at the same time cautiously and timidly, and very seldom. I thought she was afraid of her, which was quite intelligible, and seemed to draw us closer together.

"Saratov!" loudly and fiercely exclaimed my mother with startling suddenness: "Where is the sailor?"

Strange, new words to me! Saratov? Sailor?

A broad-shouldered, grey-headed individual dressed in blue now entered, carrying a small box which grandmother took from him, and in which she proceeded to place the body of my brother. Having done this she bore the box and its burden to the door on her outstretched hands; but, alas! being so stout she could only get through the narrow doorway of the cabin sideways, and now halted before it in ludicrous uncertainty.

"Really, mamma!" exclaimed my mother impatiently, taking the tiny coffin from her. Then they both disappeared, while I stayed behind in the cabin regarding the man in blue.

"Well, mate, so the little brother has gone?" he said, bending down to me.

"Who are you?"

"I am a sailor."

"And who is Saratov?"

"Saratov is a town. Look out of the window. There it is!"

Observed from the window, the land seemed to oscillate; and revealing itself obscurely and in a fragmentary fashion, as it lay steaming in the fog, it reminded me of a large piece of bread just cut off a hot loaf.

"Where has grandmother gone to?"

"To bury her little grandson."

"Are they going to bury him in the ground?"

"Yes, of course they are."

I then told the sailor about the live frogs that had been buried with my father.

He lifted me up, and hugging and kissing me, cried, "Oh, my poor little fellow, you don't understand. It is not the frogs who are to be pitied, but your mother. Think how she is bowed down by her sorrow."

Then came a resounding howl overhead. Having already learned that it was the steamer which made this noise, I was not afraid; but the sailor hastily set me down on the floor and darted away, exclaiming, "I must run!"

The desire to escape seized me. I ventured out of the door. The dark, narrow space outside was empty, and not far away shone the brass on the steps of the staircase. Glancing upwards, I saw people with wallets and bundles in their hands, evidently going off the boat. This meant that I must go off too.

But when I appeared in front of the gangway, amidst the crowd of peasants, they all began to yell at me.

"Who does he belong to? Who do you belong to?"

No one knew.

For a long time they jostled and shook and poked me about, until the grey-haired sailor appeared and seized me, with the explanation:

"It is the Astrakhan boy from the cabin."

And he ran off with me to the cabin, deposited me on the bundles and went away, shaking his finger at me, as he threatened, "I'll give you something!"

The noise overhead became less and less. The boat had ceased to vibrate, or to be agitated by the motion of the water. The window of the cabin was shut in by damp walls; within it was dark, and the air was stifling. It

seemed to me that the very bundles grew larger and began to press upon me; it was all horrible, and I began to wonder if I was going to be left alone for ever in that empty boat.

I went to the door, but it would not open; the brass handle refused to turn, so I took a bottle of milk and with all my force struck at it. The only result was that the bottle broke and the milk spilled over my legs, and trickled into my boots. Crushed by this failure, I threw myself on the bundles, crying softly, and so fell asleep.

When I awoke the boat was again in motion, and the window of the cabin shone like the sun.

Grandmother, sitting near me, was combing her hair and muttering something with knitted brow. She had an extraordinary amount of hair which fell over her shoulders and breast to her knees, and even touched the floor. It was blue-black. Lifting it up from the floor with one hand and holding it with difficulty, she introduced an almost toothless wooden comb into its thick strands. Her lips were twisted, her dark eyes sparkled fiercely, while her face, encircled in that mass of hair, looked comically small. Her expression was almost malignant, but when I asked her why she had such long hair she answered in her usual mellow, tender voice:

"Surely God gave it to me as a punishment. . . . Even when it is combed, just look at it! . . . When I was young I was proud of my mane, but now I am old I curse it. But you go to sleep. It is quite early. The sun has only just risen."

"But I don't want to go to sleep again."

"Very well, then don't go to sleep," she agreed at once, plaiting her hair and glancing at the berth on which my mother lay rigid, with upturned face. "How did you smash that bottle last evening? Tell me about it quietly."

So she always talked, using such peculiarly harmonious words that they took root in my memory like fragrant, bright, everlasting flowers. When she smiled the pupils of her dark, luscious eyes dilated and beamed with an inexpressible charm, and her strong white teeth gleamed cheerfully. Apart from her multitudinous wrinkles and her swarthy complexion, she had a youthful and brilliant

appearance. What spoiled her was her bulbous nose, with its distended nostrils, and red lips, caused by her habit of taking pinches of snuff from her black snuff-box mounted with silver, and by her fondness for drink. Everything about her was dark, but within she was luminous with an inextinguishable, joyful, and ardent flame, which revealed itself in her eyes. Although she was bent, almost hump-backed, in fact, she moved lightly and softly, for all the world like a huge cat, and was just as gentle as that caressing animal.

Until she came into my life I seemed to have been asleep, and hidden away in obscurity; but when she appeared she woke me and led me to the light of day. Connecting all my impressions by a single thread, she wove them into a pattern of many colours, thus making herself my friend for life, the being nearest my heart, the dearest and best known of all; while her disinterested love for all creation enriched me, and built up the strength needful for a hard life.

. . . . . .

II.

Then began and flowed on with astonishing rapidity an intense, varied, inexpressibly strange life. It reminded me of a crude story, well told by a good-natured but irritatingly truthful genius. Now, in recalling the past, I myself find it difficult to believe, at this distance of time, that things really were as they were, and I have longed to dispute or reject the facts—the cruelty of the drab existence of an unwelcome relation is too painful to contemplate. But truth is stronger than pity, and besides, I am writing not about myself but about that narrow, stifling environment of unpleasant impressions in which lived—ay, and to this day lives—the average Russian of this class.

My grandfather's house simply seethed with mutual hostility; all the grown people were infected and even the children were inoculated with it. I had learned, from overhearing grandmother's conversation, that my mother arrived upon the very day when her brothers demanded the distribution of the property from their father. Her

unexpected return made their desire for this all the keener and stronger, because they were afraid that my mother would claim the dowry intended for her, but withheld by my grandfather because she had married secretly and against his wish. My uncles considered that this dowry ought to be divided amongst them all. Added to this, they had been quarrelling violently for a long time among themselves as to who should open a workshop in the town, or on the Oka in the village of Kunavin.

One day, very shortly after our arrival, a quarrel broke out suddenly at dinner-time. My uncles started to their feet and, leaning across the table, began to shout and yell at grandfather, snarling and shaking themselves like dogs; and grandfather, turning very red, rapped on the table with a spoon and cried in a piercing tone of voice, like the crowing of a cock: "I will turn you out of doors!"

With her face painfully distorted, grandmother said: "Give them what they ask, Father; then you will have some peace."

"Be quiet, simpleton!" shouted my grandfather with flashing eyes; and it was wonderful, seeing how small he was, that he could yell with such deafening effect.

My mother rose from the table, and going calmly to the window, turned her back upon us all.

Suddenly Uncle Michael struck his brother on the face with the back of his hand. The latter, with a howl of rage, grappled with him; both rolled on the floor growling, gasping for breath and abusing each other. The children began to cry, and my Aunt Natalia, who was with child, screamed wildly; my mother seized her round the body and dragged her somewhere out of the way; the lively little nurse-maid, Eugenia, drove the children out of the kitchen; chairs were knocked down; the young, broad-shouldered foreman, Tsiganok, sat on Uncle Michael's back, while the head of the works, Gregory Ivanovitch, a bald-headed, bearded man with coloured spectacles, calmly bound up my uncle's hands with towels.

Turning his head and letting his thin, straggly, black beard trail on the floor, Uncle Michael cursed horribly, and grandfather, running round the table, exclaimed bitterly: "And these are brothers! . . . Blood relations! . . . Shame on you!"

At the beginning of the quarrel I had jumped on to the stove in terror; and thence, with painful amazement, I had watched grandmother as she washed Uncle Jaakov's battered face in a small basin of water, while he cried and stamped his feet, and she said in a sad voice: "Wicked creatures! You are nothing better than a family of wild beasts. When will you come to your senses?"

Grandfather, dragging his torn shirt over his shoulder, called out to her: "So you have brought wild animals into the world, eh, old woman?"

When Uncle Jaakov went out, grandmother retired to a corner and, quivering with grief, prayed: "Holy Mother of God, bring my children to their senses."

Grandfather stood beside her, and, glancing at the table, on which everything was upset or spilled, said softly:

"When you think of them, Mother, and then of the little one they pester Varia about . . . who has the best nature?"

"Hold your tongue, for goodness' sake! Take off that shirt and I will mend it. . . ." And laying the palms of her hands on his head, grandmother kissed his forehead; and he—so small compared to her—pressing his face against her shoulder, said:

"We shall have to give them their shares, Mother, that is plain."

"Yes, Father, it will have to be done."

Then they talked for a long time; amicably at first, but it was not long before grandfather began to scrape his feet on the floor like a cock before a fight, and holding up a threatening finger to grandmother, said in a fierce whisper:

"I know you! You love them more than me. . . . And what is your Mischka?—a Jesuit! And Jaaschka—a Freemason! And they live on me. . . . Hangers-on! That is all they are."

Uneasily turning on the stove, I knocked down an iron, which fell with a crash like a thunder-clap.

Grandfather jumped up on the step, dragged me down, and stared at me as if he now saw me for the first time.

"Who put you on the stove? Your mother?"

"I got up there by myself."

"You are lying!"

"No I'm not. I did get up there by myself I was frightened."

He pushed me away from him, lightly striking me on the head with the palm of his hand.

"Just like your father! Get out of my sight!"

And I was only too glad to run out of the kitchen.

. . . . . .

By Saturday I also had had time to get into trouble. I was fascinated by the ease with which the grown-up people changed the colour of different materials; they took something yellow, steeped it in black dye, and it came out dark blue. They laid a piece of grey stuff in reddish water and it was dyed mauve. It was quite simple, yet to me it was inexplicable. I longed to dye something myself, and I confided my desire to Sascha Yaakovitch, a thoughtful boy, always in favour with his elders, always good-natured, obliging, and ready to wait upon everyone.

The adults praised him highly for his obedience and his cleverness, but grandfather looked on him with no favourable eye, and used to say:

"An artful beggar that!"

Thin and dark, with prominent, watchful eyes, Sascha Yaakov used to speak in a low, rapid voice, as if his words were choking him, and all the while he talked he glanced fearfully from side to side as if he were ready to run away and hide himself on the slightest pretext. The pupils of his hazel eyes were stationary except when he was excited, and then they became merged into the whites. I did not like him. I much preferred the despised idler, Sascha Michailovitch. He was a quiet boy, with sad eyes and a pleasing smile, very like his kind mother. He had ugly, protruding teeth, with a double row in the upper jaw; and being very greatly concerned about this defect, he constantly had his fingers in his mouth, trying to loosen his back ones, very amiably allowing anyone who chose to inspect them. But that was the only interesting thing about him. He lived a solitary life in a house swarming with people, loving to sit in the dim corners in the daytime, and at the window in the evening; quite happy if he could remain without speaking, with his face pressed against the pane for hours together, gazing at the flock

of jackdaws which, now rising high above it, now sinking swiftly earthwards, in the red evening sky, circled round the dome of Uspenski Church, and finally, obscured by an opaque black cloud, disappeared somewhere, leaving a void behind them. When he had seen this he had no desire to speak of it, but a pleasant languor took possession of him.

Uncle Jaakov's Sascha, on the contrary, could talk about everything fluently and with authority, like a grown-up person. Hearing of my desire to learn the process of dyeing, he advised me to take one of the best white tablecloths from the cupboard and dye it blue.

"White always takes the colour better, I know," he said very seriously.

I dragged out a heavy tablecloth and ran with it to the yard, but I had no more than lowered the hem of it into the vat of dark-blue dye when Tsiganok flew at me from somewhere, rescued the cloth, and wringing it out with his rough hands, cried to my cousin, who had been looking on at my work from a safe place:

"Call your grandmother quickly."

And shaking his black, dishevelled head ominously, he said to me:

"You'll catch it for this."

Grandmother came running on to the scene, wailing, and even weeping, at the sight, and scolded me in her ludicrous fashion:

"Oh, you young pickle! I hope you will be spanked for this."

Afterwards, however, she said to Tsiganok: "You needn't say anything about this to grandfather, Vanka. I'll manage to keep it from him. Let us hope that something will happen to take up his attention."

Vanka replied in a preoccupied manner, drying his hands on his multi-coloured apron:

"Me? I shan't tell: but you had better see that that Sascha doesn't go and tell tales."

"I will give him something to keep him quiet," said grandmother, leading me into the house.

On Saturday, before vespers, I was called into the kitchen, where it was all dark and still. I remember the closely shut doors of the shed and of the room, and the

grey mist of an autumn evening, and the heavy patter of rain. Sitting in front of the stove on a narrow bench, looking cross and quite unlike himself, was Tsiganok; grandfather, standing in the chimney corner, was taking long rods out of a pail of water, measuring them, putting them together, and flourishing them in the air with a shrill whistling sound. Grandmother, somewhere in the shadows, was taking snuff noisily and muttering:

"Now you are in your element, tyrant!"

Sascha Jaakov was sitting in a chair in the middle of the kitchen, rubbing his eyes with his knuckles, and whining like an old beggar in a voice quite unlike his usual voice:

"Forgive me, for Christ's sake. . . .!"

Standing by the chair, shoulder to shoulder, like wooden figures, stood the children of Uncle Michael, brother and sister.

"When I have flogged you I will forgive you," said grandfather, drawing a long, damp rod across his knuckles.

"Now then . . . take down your breeches!"

He spoke very calmly, and neither the sound of his voice nor the noise made by the boy as he moved on the squeaky chair, nor the scraping of grandmother's feet, broke the memorable stillness of that almost dark kitchen, under the low, blackened ceiling.

Sascha stood up, undid his trousers, letting them down as far as his knees, then bending and holding them up with his hands, he stumbled to the bench. It was painful to look at him, and my legs also began to tremble.

But worse was to come, when he submissively lay down on the bench face downwards, and Vanka, tying him to it by means of a wide towel placed under his arms and round his neck, bent under him and with black hands seized his legs by the ankles.

"Lexei!" called grandfather. "Come nearer! Come! Don't you hear me speaking to you? Look and see what a flogging is. . . . One!"

With a mild flourish he brought the rod down on the naked flesh, and Sascha set up a howl.

"Rubbish!" said grandfather. "That's nothing! . . . But here's something to make you smart."

And he dealt such blows that the flesh was soon in a

state of inflammation and covered with great red weals, and my cousin gave a prolonged howl.

"Isn't it nice?" asked grandfather, as his hand rose and fell. "You don't like it? . . . That's for the thimble!"

When he raised his hand with a flourish my heart seemed to rise too, and when he let his hand fall something within me seemed to sink.

"I won't do it again," squealed Sascha, in a dreadfully thin, weak voice, unpleasant to hear. "Didn't I tell—didn't I tell about the tablecloth?"

Grandfather answered calmly, as if he were reading the Psalter:

"Tale-bearing is no justification. The informer gets whipped first, so take that for the tablecloth."

Grandmother threw herself upon me and seized my hand, crying: "I won't allow Lexei to be touched! I won't allow it, you monster!" And she began to kick the door, calling: "Varia! Varvara!"

Grandfather darted across to her, threw her down, seized me and carried me to the bench. I struck at him with my fists, pulled his sandy beard, and bit his fingers. He bellowed and held me as in a vice. In the end, throwing me down on the bench, he struck me on the face.

I shall never forget his savage cry: "Tie him up! I'm going to kill him!" nor my mother's white face and great eyes as she ran along up and down beside the bench, shrieking:

"Father! You mustn't! Let me have him!"

Grandfather flogged me till I lost consciousness, and I was unwell for some days, tossing about, face downwards, on a wide, stuffy bed, in a little room with one window and a lamp which was always kept burning before the case of icons in the corner. Those dark days had been the greatest in my life. In the course of them I had developed wonderfully, and I was conscious of a peculiar difference in myself. I began to experience a new solicitude for others, and I became so keenly alive to their sufferings and my own that it was almost as if my heart had been lacerated, and thus rendered sensitive.

For this reason the quarrel between my mother and grandmother came as a great shock to me—when grand-

mother, looking so dark and big in the narrow room, flew into a rage, and pushing my mother into the corner where the icons were, hissed:

"Why didn't you take him away?"

"I was afraid."

"A strong, healthy creature like you! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Varvara! I am an old woman and I am not afraid. For shame!"

"Do leave off, mother; I am sick of the whole business."

"No, you don't love him! You have no pity for the poor orphan!"

"I have been an orphan all my life," said my mother, speaking loudly and sadly.

After that they both cried for a long time, seated on a box in a corner, and then my mother said:

"If it were not for Alexei, I would leave this place —and go right away. I can't go on living in this hell, mother, I can't! I haven't the strength."

"Oh! My own flesh and blood!" whispered grandmother.

I kept all this in my mind. Mother was weak, and, like the others, she was afraid of grandfather, and I was preventing her from leaving the house in which she found it impossible to live. It was very unfortunate. Before long my mother really did disappear from the house, going somewhere on a visit.

Very soon after this, as suddenly as if he had fallen from the ceiling, grandfather appeared, and sitting on the bed, laid his ice-cold hands on my head.

"How do you do, young gentleman? Come! answer me. Don't sulk! Well? What have you to say?"

I had a great mind to kick away his legs, but it hurt me to move. His head, sandier than ever, shook from side to side uneasily; his bright eyes seemed to be looking for something on the wall as he pulled out of his pocket a gingerbread goat, a horn made of sugar, an apple, and a cluster of purple raisins, which he placed on the pillow under my very nose.

"There you are! There's a present for you."

And he stooped and kissed me on the forehead. Then, stroking my head with those small, cruel hands, yellow-

stained about the crooked, claw-like nails, he began to speak.

"I left my mark on you then, my friend. You were very angry. You bit me and scratched me, and then I lost my temper too. However, it will do you no harm to have been punished more severely than you deserved. It will go towards next time. You must learn not to mind when people of your own family beat you. It is part of your training. It would be different if it came from an outsider, but from one of us it does not count. You must not allow outsiders to lay hands on you, but it is nothing coming from one of your own family. I suppose you think I was never flogged? Oleysha! I was flogged harder than you could ever imagine even in a bad dream. I was flogged so cruelly that God Himself might have shed tears to see it. And what was the result? I—an orphan, the son of a poor mother—have risen in my present position —the head of a guild, and a master workman."

Bending his withered, well-knit body towards me, he began to tell me in vigorous and powerful language, with a felicitous choice of words, about the days of his childhood. His green eyes were very bright, and his golden hair stood rakishly on end as, deflecting his high-pitched voice, he breathed in my face.

"You travelled here by steamboat . . . steam will take you anywhere now; but when I was young I had to tow a barge up the Volga all by myself. The barge was in the water and I ran barefoot on the bank, which was strewn with sharp stones. . . . Thus I went from early in the morning to sunset, with the sun beating fiercely on the back of my neck, and my head throbbing as if it were full of molten iron. And sometimes I was overcome by three kinds of ill-luck . . . my poor little bones ached, but I had to keep on, and I could not see the way; and then my eyes brimmed over, and I sobbed my heart out as the tears rolled down. Ah! Oleysha! it won't bear talking about.

"I went on and on till the towing-rope slipped from me and I fell down on my face, and I was not sorry for it either! I rose up all the stronger. If I had not rested a minute I should have died.

"That is the way we used to live then in the sight

of God and of our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ. This is the way I took the measure of Mother Volga three times, from Simbirsk to Ribinsk, from there to Saratov, as far as Astrakhan and Markarev, to the Fair—more than three thousand versts. And by the fourth year I had become a free water-man. I had shown my master what I was made of."

As he spoke he seemed to increase in size like a cloud before my very eyes, being transformed from a small, wizened old man to an individual of fabulous strength. Had he not pulled a great grey barge up the river all by himself? Now and again he jumped up from the bed and showed me how the bargees travelled with the towing-rope round them, and how they pumped water, singing fragments of a song in a bass voice; then, youthfully springing back on the bed, to my ever-increasing astonishment, he would continue hoarsely and impressively.

"Well, sometimes, Oleysha, on a summer's evening when we arrived at Jigulak, or some such place at the foot of the green hills, we used to sit about lazily cooking our supper while the boatmen of the hill-country used to sing sentimental songs, and as soon as they began the whole crew would strike up, sending a thrill through one, and making the Volga seem as if it were running very fast like a horse, and rising up as high as the clouds; and all kinds of trouble seemed as nothing more than dust blown about by the wind. They sang till the porridge boiled over, for which the cook had to be flicked with a cloth. 'Play as much as you please, but don't forget your work,' we said."

Several times people put their heads in at the door to call him, but each time I begged him not to go.

And he laughingly waved them away, saying, "Wait a bit."

He stayed with me and told me stories until it was almost dark, and when, after an affectionate farewell, he left me, I had learned that he was neither malevolent nor formidable. It brought the tears into my eyes to remember that it was he who had so cruelly beaten me, but I could not forget it.

This visit of my grandfather opened the door to others, and from morning till night there was always somebody

sitting on my bed, trying to amuse me; I remember that this was not always either cheering or pleasant.

Oftener than any of them came my grandmother, who slept in the same bed with me. But it was Tsiganok who left the clearest impression on me in those days. He used to appear in the evenings—square-built, broad-chested, curly-headed, dressed in his best clothes—a gold-embroidered shirt, plush breeches, boots squeaking like a harmonium. His hair was glossy, his squinting, merry eyes gleamed under his thick eyebrows, and his white teeth under the shadow of his young moustache; his shirt glowed softly as if reflecting the red light of the image-lamp.

"Look here!" he said, turning up his sleeve and displaying his bare arm to the elbow. It was covered with red scars. "Look how swollen it is; and it was worse yesterday—it was very painful. When your grandfather flew into a rage and I saw that he was going to flog you, I put my arm in the way, thinking that the rod would break, and then while he was looking for another your grandmother or your mother could take you away and hide you. I am an old bird at the game, my child."

He laughed gently and kindly, and glancing again at the swollen arm, went on:

"I was so sorry for you that I thought I should choke. It seemed such a shame! . . . But he lashed away at you!"

Snorting and tossing his head like a horse, he went on speaking about the affair. This childish simplicity seemed to draw him closer to me. I told him that I loved him very much, and he answered with a simplicity which always lives in my memory.

"And I love you too! That is why I let myself be hurt—because I love you. Do you think I would have done it for anyone else? I should be making a fool of myself."

Later on he gave me whispered instructions, glancing frequently at the door. "Next time he beats you don't try to get away from him, and don't struggle. It hurts twice as much if you resist. If you let yourself go he will deal lightly with you. Be limp and soft, and don't scowl at him. Try and remember this; it is good advice."

"Surely he won't whip me again!" I exclaimed.

"Why, of course!" replied Tsiganok calmly. "Of course he will whip you again, and often too!"

"But why?"

"Because grandfather is on the watch for you." And again he cautiously advised me: "When he whips you he brings the rod straight down. Well, if you lie there quietly he may possibly hold the rod lower so that it won't break your skin. . . . Now, do you understand? Move your body towards him and the rod, and it will be all the better for you."

Winking at me with his dark, squinting eyes, he added: "I know more about such matters than a policeman even. I have been beaten on my bare shoulders till the skin came off, my boy!"

I looked at his bright face and remembered grandmother's story of Ivan-Czarevitch and Ivanoshka-dourachka.

The Minotaur

By R. Ellis Roberts

"It's all very well, my dear, but I cannot bring myself to like a man who killed my old friend Damastes."

Minos said this with an air of finality, as he took the last olive from the silver dish on the table. Before he ate his olive, a further remark occurred to him, and he hastened to express it, anxious to anticipate his daughter's retort—"No, depend on it, nothing good ever came out of Athens—except olives, Ariadne."

"Really, papa, you might remember that Theseus is not an Athenian. His father is, I admit; but a man born in a stable——" Ariadne checked herself in time. She had a grievous tendency to fall back on proverbs, and was rather proud of her competence in finding suitable ones; but she perceived that this one was a little lacking in tact at the moment, and she was anxious not to anger Minos before she had secured from him Theseus's address. So she abandoned her proverb, and went on, "Anyway, papa, why you should mind about Procrustes, I can't think. You never really got on with him, when you did meet. Besides, the man was a terrible nuisance. You know, with a landlord like that, no neighbourhood has a chance of improving. When I think of the poor people, who took the trouble to go to that dull Eleusis, and develop the property, and make it fit for civilised folk—and how they . . . they ended—why I don't feel a bit sorry that Theseus *did* kill Procrustes."

Minos, who had motioned to leave the table, sat down again, frowning.

"Really, Ariadne, this is the rankest Socialism. Damastes—and I wish you would not adopt that detestable modern fad of using nicknames—Damastes had a perfect right to do as he liked with his own. He was far more generous than most landlords. He not only supplied the fixtures; but, as you know, in many cases, the furniture."

"Yes, and in too many cases, carved his tenants about to fit the furniture."

"Great Zeus, girl, what would you have the poor man do? Alter his furniture? Cut about that splendid, neolithic bedstead? It's all very well for you and your friends with your shoddy furniture from the Athenian Stores, stuff that falls to pieces when you touch it—— you've no feelings for things, no sense of the beauty of——"

"But we have for the beauty of the human body, papa."

"Pah, sentimental gush! A couple of cretinous mattoids!"

"Really, papa, with poor dear Taury making that hideous noise every night, I don't think we are the family to talk about deformities."

Minos rose, with a certain dignity, in spite of his huge bulk; as he stood at the table, glaring down at his daughter, his flushed, angry countenance still showed sufficient signs of past nobility to make her wonder whether even Theseus was finer than her father must have been as a youth. She knew she had gone too far in her reference to her unfortunate brother; but it had slipped out before she could stop herself. Minos, after swallowing emotionally once or twice, ejaculated in low, grieved tones:

"For shame, Ariadne!" and left the dining-hall.

II.

The bright Cretan sun was streaming down on Daedalus as he stood, rashly indifferent to a stroke, in his garden at noon; and watched through a highly-polished emerald of enormous size a speck on the blue horizon. As he stood there gazing, his figure, for all its eighty years and his manifold disasters and discouragements, seemed brisk and full of nervous activity. Suddenly he stopped looking through the glass, took up a whistle, and blew several piercing notes over the sea. The speck, at which he had been gazing, rapidly came nearer, and in five or six minutes a rock-blue pigeon, with quiet whirr of resting wings, settled on his shoulder. Daedalus took from under its wing a piece of thin and carefully folded papyrus; dismissed the bird with a light tap on its head, and walked slowly to a seat in the shade where he could examine the message.

Its contents appeared to cause him some surprise and not a little anxiety. He sat back in his chair, with a frown on his handsome brow; rose suddenly and went towards the house, still peering at the papyrus.

Daedalus, taking advantage of the universal Cretan custom of the siesta, had long been in the habit of receiving his pigeon-post at noon, or thereabouts; so his reputation for acquiring information in semi-miraculous ways survived even the sceptical spirit which had grown so strong since the amazing career of Theseus. . When that Duke had first commenced hero, both Minos and Daedalus thought that he would prove to be simply an Athenian Heracles; one of those strong, stupid heroes who are a perfect god-send to the cunning. Up to now, however, Theseus showed a very disturbing combination of muscle and intellect, and no sort of inclination to be diverted from his purpose by any particularly foolish adventures—whereas Heracles was like a child and would wander miles away to clean a dirty stable or drain some poisonous fen. That neither Minos nor Daedalus had the slightest idea what Theseus was after made them no easier; still less were their fears calmed by the maddening and idiotic laughter of old Zeus, whose villa-temple, The Cave, had been visited by them several times in the hope of acquiring some hint as to the action which would be wisest to take against this upstart son of Poseidon. Knowing the shaky condition of Athenian finance Minos fully expected Theseus to make difficulties about the tribute which he had for the past three years successfully screwed out of the old king Aegeus. And now comes the very distracting news that the tribute had already left Athens, accompanied as usual with the seven youths and seven maidens for the Minotaur . . . and with, as the wretched scribe put it, His Imperial and Royal Highness, the Sublime Lord Theseus, Duke of Athens, Prince of Attica, Conduct of Innocence, Sole and Supreme Sovran of the Aegean Seas, Turannoctonos, Poseidoniades . . . in command of the frigate.

It was certainly very annoying. As Daedalus was trying to decide exactly how annoying it was, the curtains of the room were slowly parted, and a huge eunuch sidled deprecatingly towards his master. "I cannot be disturbed now by anyone," said Daedalus.

"But, my lord, it is the Lady Ariadne."

"Oh. . . ."

"Admit the Princess, Sogden"; and the fat eunuch bowed and disappeared.

A moment later the great, yellow curtains parted again, and Ariadne entered. She was wearing a curious slashed skirt of saffron and blue, and a thin, almost diaphanous, blouse cut low in the neck. On her head was a rather tall hat of straw. It was shaped like a funnel and the crown was flattened; three wide ribbons of white silk were passed across the front of the hat, carried round to the back, and there crossed and held in position by a golden grasshopper, whose long, trembling antennæ were of a bright emerald green metal.

"It is good of you, my lord, to receive me at this rather untimely hour. . . ." Ariadne faltered a little as if expecting Daedalus to make some response; he remained, however, silent, merely acknowledging her remark by a slight bow. The Princess went on, not quite so cheerfully. . . . "The matter on which I wish your help is of some importance . . . to me. My lord," this with just a shade of imperiousness, "I trust I have your attention."

"That the Lady Ariadne secures from everyone. If she tell her business, I will do anything I can to assist her."

Ariadne approached nearer to the old man and looked appealingly up at his face: then she whispered, rather hurriedly:

"My lord, can you give me the Duke Theseus's address?"

Daedalus looked quizzingly at Minos's daughter. He had heard rumours as to the interest Theseus had created in the Princess; but this was his first intimation that Minos disapproved of that interest. He parried the eager question.

"I hope the High King is well?"

"Thank you, my lord, my father was in excellent health when I left him: but why do you ask?"

"I wondered how it was that you had not sought information from him." Ariadne bit her lip. "My lord, I will be frank. You remember the affair of Procrustes?" Daedalus nodded. "Well, father cannot—or pretends he

cannot—get over that. I think it's absurd. Procrustes may have come from an old stock—but he was quite *demodé*. Indeed, the man was frankly *impayable*: and I'm glad Theseus put him out of the way. What I believe is that father is really a little—well, shall we say, jealous for our house's honour and glory? The Lord Duke Theseus is certainly a remarkable man, and has done remarkable things, hasn't he?"

"He has. Not the least is the way in which he has intrigued the Lady Ariadne."

"Oh! my interest is not merely . . . merely personal. You see, father will not ask Theseus here: and I thought it would be nice if I could drop him a line and ask him to propose himself. . . ."

"Do you know where he is, Daedalus?"

"Well, at the moment, I do *not*. But two days ago he left Athens."

"Left Athens!"

"I suppose you hadn't remembered, my lady, that Crete and Athens have a certain connection?"

"You mean in art—in—Oh! you mean that stupid tribute. No. I had forgotten all about that. I don't know why Father doesn't stop it. I'm sure Taury has had enough by now."

"It's not Minotaur who worries us. It's the need for money."

"Oh, that's so vulgar. Or why don't we take it from somewhere else? But, anyway, what has all this—high Zeus! you don't say——"

"Yes. Theseus is in command of the frigate which will bring the tribute and the—er—companions for Minotaur. He is one of them."

Ariadne almost forgot her manners in the excitement of the news. She called in her women, bade Daedalus a hasty farewell, and ordered her litter to take her back to the palace.

III.

In the heart of the Labyrinth, Minotaur sighed deeply. He did not understand. That had really been his perpetual difficulty. He never had understood. Nothing had more distressed and grieved Minos than the stupidity of his

"heir." It was not as if poor Minotaur was ordinarily stupid. He had not even got the low cunning of the aborigines of the mainland. Why, when young Icarus had taken his toys away, Minotaur, instead of beating him, had asked him if he'd like some more. "The lad's a perfect moon-calf," exclaimed Pasiphae; and then slowly, bred from a taste we can only lament as rococo, sprang the absurd and disgusting fable of his begetting by a bull. Still, it was evident that Minotaur could not be allowed to remain about the palace. He was really too much of a fool. He gave things away to the courtiers, and he had no sense at all of the respect due to his birth. Pasiphae in vain tried to threaten him with hints as to a summer holiday with Zeus; but Minotaur only said he thought that Grandfather must be lonely and he'd be glad to go to him. Even had he been less stupid, his physical appearance made it difficult for the family. He was of huge bulk, and he had an odd malformation of the feet, which lent colour to the fantastic story of the bull. In addition, his voice was one of such enormous volume that Daedalus had to invent an instrument through which he might engage in ordinary conversation. Otherwise, his interlocutors would have been deafened. He took no interest in war or in money-making; and while he despised the culture of the Minoan Court, he listened avidly to the stupid songs of the indolent peasantry. It was his tendency to wander about among the lower classes which compelled Minos to take steps for secluding him. So, at last, on Daedalus's suggestion (the contract was worth at least £10,000 to that skilled architect) the Labyrinth was built; and Athens was forced to send companions for Minotaur.

This question of companionship had worried Minos considerably, for he was a kind-hearted man, and could not bear the thought of his son, however stupid, living in complete solitude. On the other hand, it was evident he must not associate with Cretans, who would certainly conspire against the dynasty if they thought Minotaur was in the succession; and the same reason made it impossible to allow any Athenians to return home with stories of the heir's extreme incompetence. Then Daedalus came to his rescue with the idea of the Labyrinth—a structure from which it was almost impossible to effect an exit.

In the innermost chamber of this building, Minotaur sighed deeply. He was very bored. The most tragic thing about his fate was that he had a strong sense of duty. He liked nothing less than entertaining guests: but here they were, and strangers at that, and he felt bound to make them comfortable. On their first arrival, each batch of Athenian visitors was a trifle nervous. The simplest of them—and it was becoming difficult to get any of the *intelligenzia* to consent to the exile—almost credited the absurd fables as to Minotaur's origin and habits. But they were soon reassured. When they saw his great round face, his huge spectacles made of pebbles mounted in horn, his hesitating smile, and his limp, deprecating hand, they felt their owner could not be really dangerous. Minotaur had really become the manager of a monstrous hotel. He did not know how many guests he had—for, besides the regular arrivals from Athens, there were always servants from the country; and also, as most of the Athenians formed what they called Labyrinthine alliances, there was a fairly steady arrival of babies. Minotaur sighed again. Minos in his palace heard him, and grunted with displeasure. He little knew what was disturbing his son. Poor Minotaur was sitting in his big stone chair, on which were carved in coloured relief, fennel, borage, and cowslips, with a frown on his broad, amiable brow. In front of him stood a fat little eunuch in a puce-coloured, sleeveless tunic, girt about the middle with a girdle of green cord. Minotaur leant sideways in his chair, so that the eunuch should not meet the direct force of his sighs. Heavily he spoke.

"They complain, Belisarius, of rabbit stew?"

"Sire, they flung the last pot in my face."

Minotaur sighed again.

"It is very difficult to satisfy them, Belisarius. Can you suggest anything?"

"Well, Sire, braised goat——"

"The very thing: get some goats and 'er—braise them. And do you mind bringing me my nasturtium salad, and a little cream? My breakfast was forgotten this morning."

"Certainly, Sire. I was going to remark that as we shall have visitors to-morrow——"

"Visitors?"

"Yes, Sire. Surely you have not forgotten? The new

guests from Athens will be here, and Theseus, it is said, is among them."

"Theseus? Theseus? I seem to know the name. Is that the scholar who produced that enlightening book on the reasons of poverty and how the rich avoid it?"

What a fool the Prince is, thought the eunuch scornfully.

"No, Sire," he said, "this is *the* Theseus, Duke of Athens, Poseidoniades, the Sublime Governor of the Outer and the Inner Seas."

"Oh! I remember. The chap who put old Damastes out of the way——. Rather hasty, but, on the whole, a good thing. But how on earth have they induced him to come here?"

"I believe His Highness comes from a strict sense of religion, Sire."

"Really—well, I shall be glad to see him."

"And may I make suitable preparations for the banquet, Sire?"

"Yes—yes—don't bother me more than you can help."

Minotaur at this turned towards the eunuch and sighed gently: the little man was caught in the gust and floated slowly and safely down the flight of porphyry steps on to the lower hall.

IV.

It was the day of Theseus's arrival. Hitherto, the disembarkation of the Athenian captives had been accompanied by a mixed ceremony. The Court herald, Snake King at Arms, had carefully devised a solemnity which symbolised the legendary fate of the victims, represented the hospitality of Crete, and was just tinged with a note of triumph at the reception of so important a gift. This year, however, at Ariadne's request, the ceremony was profoundly modified. She wished everyone's thoughts to be occupied with the arrival of Theseus, to the exclusion of his lesser companions and the sordid question of money. When the frigate arrived, a series of detonators, one for every year of the Duke's age, was exploded by Daedalus from his terrace. When the bark was actually in the harbour and against the pier, a long procession of men and maidens was formed, reaching for miles from the Palace

gates to the pier. On a large car, supported by outriders, and drawn by huge black bulls, Ariadne herself sat, symbolising Crete. Beneath her throne there was a smaller chair. To this the Duke Theseus was conducted by twelve Ethiopian slaves of gigantic stature. Each slave carried a great flambeau, which flared palely against the setting sun, and burnt with the sweet, strong scent of aromatic herbs. The Duke's companions were convoyed in less splendour to double carrying-chairs. When Theseus approached the great car, Ariadne placed her hands on her forehead, and made him an exquisite little nod. The Duke was ravished at the impudent archness of her expression, and dumfounded at the wonderful fashion of her clothes, For this occasion Ariadne wore a new costume, designed by Arachne. Her trousers, of a cool green, were fastened just above the ankle-bone by slim, silver-grey cords, which looked like slow-worms. Her ankles were bare. Her feet were shod in slippers of shagreen, hard and bright. A brilliant yellow jacket covered her to just below the knees in front, and flowed in a train at the back. She could not avoid the traditional low corsage of the Cretan women; and her breasts were visible. Between them were three great black roses. Her head, to the huge scandal of the suburbs, was bare; except that over the left ear she had fastened another black rose. Four slim boys, each dressed in a long white toga, held over her a huge umbrella, painted outside in alternate stripes of black and green, and inside a deep rose madder. In response to her greeting, Theseus shaded his eyes with his hand.

He bowed low. "Lady, the sun has done well to set."

Ariadne smiled her pleasure: but she would not miss her retort.

"*Our* lords say the sun never *does* set in Crete, your Grace. But come, will you be seated?"

Theseus went to his chair.

"Athens is proud for once to sit at the feet of Crete."

Ariadne had arranged for this compliment as carefully as her maid had done her hair; and she was obviously pleased Theseus had known his cue.

"Shall we proceed, Lord Duke?"

"With you, any whither, Lady!"

On the rather tiresome journey home—for black bulls are not to be hurried easily—Ariadne told Theseus how desolated her father was that a touch of the gout had forced him to stay indoors. The truth was that, when Ariadne had told her father of her determination to receive the Duke worthily, Minos had growled that she might do as she pleased, and have what damn'd flummery she liked—but he would wait for the fellow in the Palace. "And mind, my girl, no tricks. I'll just say 'good-evening' to him, and then off he goes to Minotaur. You're not to encourage him to get above himself, even if he is a Duke. He's chosen to come here as a companion, and a companion he shall be."

Ariadne had consented at the time, but had no intention of allowing Theseus to be mewed up in the Labyrinth. His obvious admiration had encouraged her light affection for him, and she proceeded to make with him a plan of action.

"I'm afraid, my Lord, my father will be vexed if you don't visit Minotaur."

"But, Lady, of course, it is what I have come for. By the way," Theseus added, and in a less consequential tone, "how bad is he exactly?"

"How bad, my Lord? I don't understand you. My brother is very retiring——"

"Your brother, dear Lady!——"

"Great Kronos, Duke, you do not believe those vulgar legends about Minotaur? You mean to say that a man of your education and experience——"

"Oh—of course not—though some of my poor companions are fully expecting to be eaten. But I thought His Royal Highness must be—well, hang it all, dearest Lady, one does not usually keep the heir to the greatest throne in Europe penned up in a puzzle-box, does one? Be frank with me."

"No—of course, Minotaur is not *ordinary*. You see, he has no inclination to kingship. He doesn't care about power. Daedalus has a hard phrase about it—now what was it?—After the last examination he diagnosed the complaint definitely—I remember. Minotaur is a scientific philosopher!"

"Is he, by Pallas!"

"Yes, or a philosophic scientist. Do you know what it means, Duke?"

"Thank Heavens, no. But I know those who might. They're beginning to breed them in Athens—but *not* in the royal family, what?"

Ariadne laughed gaily.

"I'll tell you later, Duke—but there are stories about you, you know!"

"Hush—but then no one can hide the mark of Olympus."

"Well, Duke, what I wanted to say was that there is an old tradition that no one who enters the Labyrinth must come out. And, indeed, no one ever has, I believe."

"That will not suit me, Lady."

"No: so I'm going to tell you the way. After you have had your interview with Minotaur—tell him some of your stories, won't you?—you'll be conducted to a special apartment in the Labyrinth. When lights are out—the last flambeau is put out somewhere about 1 a.m., leave your room and go to the right, down a passage. Have you a glow-worm torch?"

"Yes, I brought mine from Athens. I wasn't sure——"

"Oh! we've had them here for months. Well, you'll need it down the passage. You'll see a great many doors with 'No Exit' written over them. Don't try to get out that way, as there are traps and things. But there is one door on which is simply written 'Way Out.' Conquer your natural repugnance, and open that. There may be a shower over it—but I don't think so. Then you will find on the right wall a rope, distant from the ground about four feet. Follow that, and it will bring you to the great door. It will be padlocked. Here, Duke, is the key, and here," ended Ariadne, as she pressed the slim Yale into his hand, "are Papa and the Palace!"

V.

"I haven't enjoyed an evening so for years," said Minotaur through his speaking tube, glowing with admiration and affection at Theseus, who, with a complacent but kindly look on his face, was sitting near his host in the Minotaur's private den.

Ariadne, although she had secured a polite reception from Minos, had not been able to prevent the Duke being dispatched to the Labyrinth at sundown.

There had been a magnificent banquet. Belisarius had excelled himself. Apart from the *pièce de resistance*, a lamb stuffed with quails, which were stuffed with olives, themselves farced with larks' tongues, there was an astonishing array of side-dishes. There was a wonderful salad of nasturtium, apple, and poppy seeds. There was a sweet —raspberries pounded to a juice covered with whipped cream, in which had been melted six pounds of sugar; this was covered with whole raspberries, whose stalks had been taken out, and replaced by an artificial stalk made of pine-apple. There was a duck stuffed with green figs and damsons, and served with a sauce of orange juice and peacocks' brains. There was a monstrous venison pasty, on whose top little pigs, compounded of spices, held truffles in their mouths. There were tongues cooked in old Minoan wine, and then smeared with honey and milk. There were pineapples whose cores had been cunningly removed; and in their place peaches, soaked in maraschino, had been introduced. There were great gilt cakes, from which sprang wonderful drinks hidden in the centre of each.

Minotaur made a hearty meal of two apples and a lettuce; and Theseus, after admiring everything, ate nothing but a duck, a dozen goose-eggs poached in cream, and a small plum tart.

After dinner the two had adjourned to Minotaur's room, and had continued their conversation about Theseus. It was well after midnight when Minotaur expressed his pleasure in his evening, and Theseus thought it was time to retire—especially if he were going to leave that night. Somehow he felt mean in sneaking away from this big, ugly, unsuspicious, good-humoured creature, with his misshapen feet and head, and bellow of a voice. Also the Minoan wine is strong and Theseus had drunk freely. Anyway, whether we put it down to the generosity of his character or of the wine, Theseus blurted out:

"Look here, Minotaur, do you know why I came?"

"'Pon my soul, I don't: but I'm heartily glad of it."

"Well, I really came to stop this stupid business of the tribute and—and——"

Theseus felt he could not say "kill you": besides, he had never seriously thought it would be necessary.

"To see me—ah! to rid the people of Athens from the plague, etc.—eh, Theseus?"

"Something of that sort, old man. I'm sorry, but, of course, I had merest rumour to go on."

"Of course—but you don't want to put me out of the way?"

"Great Pallas, no. But the tribute must stop, we really can't afford the cash: the men and girls don't matter—Zeus! I have it. Look here, Minotaur, I'm leaving here to-night——"

"You can't—it can't be done——"

"I can, I tell you. I'll tell you how later. But why not come too? Come to Athens with me. There are a lot of—of—jolly fellows there whom you can talk to. Lots of—you know—philosophic chaps. And if you are in Athens, your Governor can't go on asking us to send you the companions: and we won't send him the money."

Theseus looked anxiously at Minotaur. The big creature sat and smiled. Then he nodded.

"I will. I must just collect my things, and I'm with you. But how are we going to get out?"

"Oh! that's all right. Ariadne gave me the key, and told me the way."

Minotaur, who had got up, sat down again heavily. He shook his head.

"That's bad. I'm sorry for you, Theseus. I am really."

And although the Duke followed him about, begging him to explain, Minotaur refused to say more than:

"Poor fellow. Ariadne after him. Poor old fellow," which nearly drove Theseus frantic.

Only as they went along the little passage which led to the Great Gate, Minotaur boomed cautiously to his guest:

"I say, Theseus, when we are outside, I'll slip down to the harbour and get aboard. You won't want me about."

VI.

The *Bird of Athens* danced gaily over the waves.

Ariadne was lying in a hammock on the upper deck.

She was very cross. She was already a little tired of Theseus; but this did not annoy her. She was bored with having Minotaur on board: but that was not the cause of her anger. She was furious because she had perceived that Theseus was tired of her.

So as Theseus approached her, Ariadne frowned.

Before he could speak, she asked him:

"When shall we reach Athens, Theseus?"

"It is a little difficult to be certain—the wind is so variable. That"—and he pointed eagerly at a dim shadow on the horizon—"is Naxos."

"Really," drawled Ariadne. As a matter of fact, she was excited, for Naxos had the reputation of being the smartest watering-place in the Aegean. It was the only one left now with a casino.

"Yes—jolly little island."

"I daresay, Theseus. I notice you always change the subject now. I want to know when we shall reach Athens, because I am thinking we had better get married on board ship."

"Get married!"

"Yes."

"But, really, dearest. I hadn't thought of it. I mean —well, I can't. I *am* married."

"Liar!"

"Very well, Ariadne, if you take that line, rational discussion becomes impossible." And Theseus turned to go.

"Stop. Even if it is true, as I am willing to overlook it, I don't think it very delicate of you to mention it. Still, what can one expect from an Athenian?" She tapped her foot impatiently on the deck, while Theseus stood by, resolutely dumb.

"Are you determined not to marry me?"

"That's not the right way to put it. I can't marry you, as things are."

"Very well, Theseus. Then I cannot stay any longer on your ship. It would not be *convenable*. You must put out of your course, and land me at Naxos."

Theseus attempted to disguise his joy.

"Well, my dear, perhaps it would be wisest. These few days will always be a precious memory to me. We have loved, Ariadne."

Her beautiful eyes filled with tears. She had practised that habit for hours on end.

"Ah! Theseus, *I* have loved. Leave me now."

VII.

In her first floor suite at the Megadomos, Naxos, Ariadne sat. She had writing materials in front of her, and had just finished a note. She hastily dusted the ink, and folded it. Then she turned to her maid.

"You are sure he is stopping at Vine Villa?"

"Yes, my Lady."

Ariadne wrote carefully on the note:

"*To the* High Lord Dionysos Iacchos."

She dusted the words, her head prettily on one side.

Then she handed the note to the maid.

"Take that round yourself, Eustochion, but first give me the glass."

. . . . . .

About the same time Minotaur, leaning on the poop of the *Bird of Athens*, gazed eagerly at the City of the Violet Crown. Theseus clapped him affectionately on the shoulder. He had got really fond of this quiet, kindly philosopher.

"There, Taury, there she is. And you can philosophise there to your heart's content."

"And they'll let me into their houses? I can discuss in houses?"

"My dear soul, in the market place, if you like. We're not afraid of talk."

Minotaur sighed with a sort of solemn joy, and gripped the Duke's hand.

THE WAR OF LIBERATION

From a Journal (ii)

By May Sinclair

Friday, October 9th.—The hospital is so full that beds have been put in the entrance hall along the walls by the big ward and the secretarial bureau. In the recess by the ward are three British soldiers.

There are some men standing about there whose heads and faces are covered with a thick white mask of cotton-wool like a diver's helmet. There are three small holes in each white mask for mouth and eyes. The effect is appalling.

These are the men whose faces have been burnt by shell-fire at Antwerp.

Towards one o'clock news came of heavy fighting. The battle is creeping nearer to us; it has stretched from Zele and Quatrecht to Melle, four and a half miles from Ghent. They are saying that the Germans may enter Ghent to-day, in an hour—half an hour! It will be very awkward for us and for our wounded if they do, as both our ambulance cars are out.

Later news of more fighting at Quatrecht.

Afternoon.—We have heard that all the war correspondents have been sent out of Ghent.

Numbers of British troops came in to-day.

3.30.—No Germans have appeared yet.

. . . . . .

I was sitting up in the mess-room, making entries in the Day-book, when I was sent for. Somebody or something had arrived, and was waiting below.

On the steps of the hospital I found two brand-new British chauffeurs in brand-new suits of khaki. Behind them, drawn up in the entry, were two brand-new Daimler motor-ambulance cars.

I thought it was a Field Ambulance that had lost itself on the way to France. The chauffeurs (they had beautiful

manners, and were very spick and span, and one pleased me by his remarkable resemblance to an editor whom I knew)—the chauffeurs wanted to know whether they had come to the right place. And, of course, they hardly had, if all the British Red Cross ambulance cars were going into France.

Then they explained.

They were certainly making for Ghent. The British Red Cross Society had sent them there. They were only anxious to know whether they had come to the right hospital, the hospital where the English Motor Field Ambulance Corps were quartered.

Yes: that was right. They had been sent for us.

They had just come up from Ostend, and they had not been ten minutes in Ghent before orders came through for an ambulance to be sent at once to Melle.

The only available member of the Corps was its secretary and reporter. To that utterly untrained and supremely inappropriate person Heaven sent this incredible luck.

There was a delay of ten minutes, no more, while I got some cake and sandwiches for the hungry chauffeurs and took them to the bureau to have their brassards stamped. And in every minute of the ten I suffered tortures while we waited. I thought something *must* happen to prevent my taking that ambulance car out. I thought my heart would leave off beating and I should die before we started (I believe people feel like this sometimes before their wedding-night). I thought the Commandant would come back and send out somebody else instead. I thought the Military Power would come down from its secret hiding-place and stop me. But none of these things happened. At the last moment, I thought that M. C——

M. C—— was the Belgian Red Cross guide who took us into Antwerp. To M. C—— I said simply and firmly that I was going. The functions of the secretary and reporter had never been very clearly defined, and this was certainly not the moment to define them. M. C——, in his innocence, accepted me with confidence and a chivalrous gravity that left nothing to be desired.

The chauffeur, Newlands (the leaner and darker one), declared himself ready for anything. All he wanted was to get to work. Poor Ascot, who was so like my friend

the editor, had to be content with his vigil in the back yard.

At last we got off. I might have trusted Heaven. The getting off was a foregone conclusion, for we went along the south-east road, which had not worked its mysterious fascination for nothing.

At a fork where two roads go into Ghent we saw one of our old ambulance cars dashing into Ghent down the other road on our left. It was beyond hail. Heaven *meant* us to go on uninterrupted and unchallenged.

I had not allowed for trouble at the barrier. There always is a barrier, which may be anything from a mile to four miles from the field or village where the wounded are. Yesterday on the way to Lokeren the barrier was at Z——. To-day it was somewhere half-way between Ghent and Melle.

None of us had ever quite got to the bottom of the trouble at the barrier. We know that the Belgian authorities wisely refused all responsibilities. Properly speaking, our ambulances were not supposed to go nearer than a certain safe distance from the enemy's firing line. For two reasons. First, it stood the chance of being shelled or taken prisoner. Second, there was a very natural fear that it might draw down the enemy's fire on the Belgians. Our huge, lumbering cars with their brand-new khaki hoods and flaming red crosses on a white ground were an admirable mark for German guns. But as the Corps, in this case, went into the firing-line on foot, I do not think that the risk was to the Belgians. So, though in theory we stopped outside the barriers, in practice we invariably got through.

The new car was stopped at the barrier now by the usual Belgian Army Medical Officer. We were not to go on to Melle.

I said that we had orders to go on to Melle, and I meant to go on to Melle. The medical officer said again that we were not to go, and I said again that we were going.

Then that Belgian Army Medical Officer began to tell us what I imagine is the usual barrier tale.

There were any amount of ambulances at Melle.

There were no wounded at Melle.

And in any case this ambulance wouldn't be allowed

to go there. And then the usual battle of the barrier had place.

It was one against three. For M. C—— went over to the enemy, and the chauffeur, Newlands, confronted by two official adversaries in uniform, became deafer and deafer to my voice in his right ear.

First the noble and chivalrous Belgian Red Cross guide, with an appalling treachery, gave the order to turn the car round to Ghent. I gave the counter order. Newlands wavered for one heroic moment; then he turned the car round.

I jumped out and went up to the Army Medical Officer and delivered a frontal attack, discharging execrable French.

"No wounded? You tell us that tale every day, and there are always wounded. Do you want any more of them to die? I mean to go on and I shall go on."

I didn't ask him how he thought he could stop one whom Heaven had predestined to go on to Melle.

M. C—— had got out now to see the fight.

The Army Medical Officer looked the secretary and reporter up and down, taking in that vision of inappropriateness and disproportion. There was a faint, a very faint smile under the ferocity of his moustache, the first sign of relenting. The secretary and reporter saw the advantage and followed it, as you might follow a bend in the enemy's line of defence.

"I *want* to go on" (placably, almost pathetically). "*Je veux continuer.* Do you by any chance imagine we're *afraid*?"

At this, M. C——, the Belgian guide, smiled too, under a moustache not quite so ferocious as the Army Medical Officer's. They shrugged their shoulders. They had done their duty. Anyhow, they had lost the battle.

The guide and the reporter jumped back into the car; I didn't hear anybody give the order, but the chauffeur, Newlands, turned her round in no time, and we dashed past the barrier and into Melle.

The village street, that had been raked by *mitrailleuses* from the field beyond it, was quiet when we came in, and almost deserted. Up a side street, propped against the wall of a stable, four wounded Frenchmen waited for

the ambulance. A fifth, shot through the back of his head by a dum-dum bullet, lay in front of them on a stretcher that dripped blood.

I found Mr. Grierson in the village, left behind by the last ambulance. He was immensely astonished at my arrival with the new car. He had with him an eager little Englishman, one of the sort that tracks an ambulance everywhere on the off-chance of being useful.

And the *curé* of the village was there. He wore the Red Cross brassard on the sleeve of his cassock and he carried the Host in a little bag of purple silk.

They told me that the village had been fired on by shrapnel a few minutes before we came into it. They said we were only a hundred (?) yards from the German trenches. We could see the edge of the field from the village street. The trenches (?) were at the bottom of it.

It was my bad luck all over again. The firing stopped as soon as I came within range of it, and didn't begin again until we had got away.

You couldn't take any interest in the firing or the German trenches, or the eager little Englishman, or anything. You couldn't see anything but those five wounded men, or think of anything but how to get them into the ambulance as painlessly and in as short a time as possible.

The man on the dripping stretcher was mortally wounded. He was lifted in first, very slowly and gently.

The *curé* climbed in after him, carrying the Host.

He kneeled there while the blood from the wounded head oozed through the bandages and through the canvas of the stretcher to the floor and to the skirts of his cassock.

We waited.

There was no ugly haste in the supreme act; the three mortal moments that it lasted (it could not have lasted more) were charged with immortality, while the *curé* remained kneeling in the pool of blood.

I shall never become a Catholic. But if I do, it will be because of the *curé* of Melle, who turned our new motor ambulance into a sanctuary after the French soldier had baptised it with his blood. I have never seen, I never shall see, anything more beautiful and more gracious than the soul that appeared in his lean, dark face and in the straight, slender body under the black *soutane*. In his

simple, inevitable gestures you saw adoration of God, contempt for death, and uttermost compassion.

It was all over. I received his missal and his bag of purple silk as he gathered his cassock about him and came down.

I asked him if anything could be done. His eyes smiled as he answered. But his lips quivered as he took again his missal and his purple bag.

M. C—— is glad now that we went on to Melle.

We helped the four other wounded men in. They sat in a row alongside the stretcher.

I sat on the edge of the ambulance, at the feet of the dying man; by the handles of the stretcher.

At the last minute Mr. Grierson jumped on to the step. So did the little eager Englishman. Hanging on to the hood and swaying with the rush of the car, he talked continually. He talked from the moment we left Melle to the moment when we landed him at his street in Ghent; explaining over and over again the qualifications that justified him in attaching himself to ambulances. He had lived fourteen years in Ghent. He could speak French and Flemish.

I longed for the eager little Englishman to stop. I longed for his street to come and swallow him up. He had lived in Ghent fourteen years. He could speak Flemish and French. I felt that I couldn't bear it if he went on a minute longer. I wanted to think. The dying man lay close behind me, very straight and stiff; his poor feet stuck out close under my hand.

But I couldn't think. The little eager Englishman went on swaying and talking.

He had lived fourteen years in Ghent.

He could speak French and Flemish.

. . . . . .

The dying man was still alive when he was lifted out of the ambulance.

He died that evening.

. . . . . .

Sunday, 11th.—Went over to the Couvent de Saint Pierre; where Miss Ashley-Smith is with her four British wounded. I had to warn her that the Germans may come in to-night. I had told the Commandant about her yester-

day and arranged with him that we should take her and her British away in our ambulance if we have to go. I had to find out how many there would be to take.

The Convent is a little way beyond the *Place* on the Boulevard. I knew it by the Red Cross hanging from the upper windows. Everything is as happy and peaceful here as if Ghent were not on the eve of an invasion. The nuns took me to Miss Ashley-Smith in her ward. I hardly knew her, for she had changed the uniform of the British Field Hospital for the white linen of the Belgian Red Cross. I found her in charge of the ward. Absolutely unperturbed by the news, she went on superintending the disposal of a table of surgical instruments. She would not consent to come with us at first, because one of her four British is too ill to be moved. But the nuns persuaded her that he would be as well looked after as if she were there, and that she would do no good by remaining.*

I am to come again and tell her what time to be ready with her wounded, when we know whether we are going, and when.

Came back to the Flandria and finished entries in my Day-book.

Evening.—The Commandant has come back from Melle; but he is going back again almost directly. He has been to the British lines and heard for certain that the Germans will be in Ghent before morning. We have orders to clear out before two in the morning. I am to have all his things packed by midnight.

The British Consul has left Ghent.

The news spreads through the Flandria.

Marie, the *bonne*, stands at the door of the service-room and watches us with frightened eyes. She follows me into the mess-room and shuts the door. The poor thing has been seized with panic, and her one idea is to get away from Ghent. Can I find a place for her on one of our ambulance cars? She will squeeze in anywhere, she will stand outside on the step.

It is ghastly. I have to tell her that it is impossible; that there will be no place for her in the ambulance cars,

* She heroically went back to Ghent from Ecloo the next morning and stayed there till the death of one of her patients.

that they will be crammed with wounded, that we will have to stand on the steps ourselves.

And this is only the beginning. After Marie comes Janet McNeil. She, poor child, has surrendered to the overpowering assault on her feelings and has pledged herself to smuggle the four young children of Madame ——, one of the Belgian Red Cross nurses, into the ambulance somehow. I don't see how it was possible for her to endure the agony of refusing this request. But what we are to do with four young children in cars packed with wounded soldiers, through all the stages of the Belgian Army's retreat——!

The next problem that faced me was the Commandant's packing—how to get all the things he had brought with him into one small Gladstone bag and a sleeping-sack. There was a blue serge suit, two sleeping-suits, a large Burberry, a great many pocket-handkerchiefs, socks and stockings, an assortment of neckties, a quantity of small miscellaneous objects whose fugitive tendencies he proposed to frustrate by confinement in a large tin biscuit-box; there was the biscuit-box itself, a tobacco tin, a packet of Gillette razors, a pipe, a leather case containing some electric apparatus, and a fat scarlet volume: Freud's *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*. All these things he had pointed out to me as they lay flung on the bed or strewn about the room. He had impressed on me the absolute necessity of packing every one of them, and by the pathetic grouping around the Gladstone bag of the biscuit-box, the tobacco-tin, the case of instruments, and Freud, I gathered that he believed that they would all enter the bag placably and be contained in it with ease.

The night is still young.

I pack the Gladstone bag. By alternate coaxing and coercion Freud and the tobacco-tin and the biscuit-box occupy it amicably enough; but the case of instruments offers an unconquerable resistance.

The night is not quite so young as it has been, and I think I must have left off packing to run over to the Hotel Cecil and pay my bill; for I remember going out into the *Place* and seeing a crowd drawn up in the middle of it before the Flandria. An official was addressing this crowd.

ordering them to give up their revolvers and any arms they had on them.

The fate of Ghent depends on absolute obedience to this order.

When I get back I find Mrs. Torrence downstairs in the hall of the Flandria.

I ask her what we had better do about our refugee children. She says we can do nothing. There must be no refugee children. How *can* there be in an ambulance packed with wounded men?

The night goes on. I sit with Mr. ——, while Mrs. Torrence settles the sad affair of the children. I hope it will be soon over, for I have still to finish the Commandant's packing; I have not yet begun my own, and it is time that I should go round to the Convent to tell Miss Ashley-Smith to be ready with her British before two o'clock.

Monday, 12th.—It is past midnight, and very dark. The *Place* and the boulevards are deserted. I cannot see the Red Cross flag hanging from the window of the Convent. The boulevards look all the same in the blackness, and I turn up the one to the left. I run on and on very fast, but I cannot see the white flag with the red cross anywhere; I run back, thinking I must have passed it, turn, and go on again.

There is nobody in sight. No sound anywhere but the sound of my own feet running faster and faster up the wrong boulevard.

At last I know I have gone too far, the houses are entirely strange. I run back to the *Place* to get my bearings, and start again. I run faster than ever. I pass a solitary civilian coming down the boulevard. The place is so empty and so still that he and I seem to be the only things alive and awake in this quarter of the town. As I pass he turns to look after me, wondering at the solitary lady running so fast at this hour of the morning. I see the Red Cross flag in the distance, and I come to a door that looks like the door of the Convent. It *is* the door of the Convent.

I ring the bell. I ring it many times. Nobody comes.

I ring a little louder. A tired lay sister puts her head

out of an upper window and asks me what I want. I tell her. She is rather cross and says I've come to the wrong door. I must go to the second door; and she puts her head in and shuts the window with a clang that expresses her just resentment.

I go to the second door, and ring many times again. And another lay sister puts her head out of an upper window.

She is gentle, but sleepy and very slow. She cannot take it in all at once. She says they are all asleep in the Convent, and she does not like to wake them. She says this several times, so that I may understand.

I am exasperated.

"*Mais, Madame—de grâce! C'est peut-être la vie ou la mort!*"

The minute I've said it it sounds to me melodramatic and absurd. *I* am melodramatic and absurd, with my running feet, and my small figure and earnest, upturned face, standing under a Convent wall at midnight, and talking about *la vie et la mort*. It is too improbable. *I* am too improbable. I feel that I am making a fuss out of all proportion to the occasion. And I am sorry for frightening the poor lay sister all for nothing.

Very soon, down the south-east road, the Germans will be marching upon Ghent.

And I cannot realise it. The whole thing is too improbable.

But the lay sister has understood this time. She will go and wake the porteress. She is not at all frightened.

I wait a little longer, and presently the porteress opens the door. When she hears my message she goes away, and returns after a little while with one of the nuns.

They are very quiet, very kind, and absolutely unafraid. They say that Miss Ashley-Smith and her British wounded shall be ready before (?) two o'clock.

I go back to the Flandria.

The Commandant, who went out to Melle in Tom's car, has not come back yet.

I think Ursula Dearmer and Mrs. Lambert have gone to bed. They are not taking the Germans very seriously.

There is nobody in the mess-room but the other three chauffeurs, Bert, Tom, and Newlands. Newlands has just

come back from Ostend. They have had no supper. We bustle about to find some.

We all know that the Germans are coming into Ghent. But we do not speak of it. We are all very polite, almost supernaturally gentle, and very kind to each other. The beautiful manners of Newlands are conspicuous in this hour, the tragedy of which we are affecting to ignore. I behave as if there was nothing so important in the world as cutting bread for Newlands. Newlands behaves as if there were nothing so important as fetching a bottle of Formamint, which he has with him, to cure my cough. (It has burst out again worse than ever after the unnatural repression of last night.)

When the chauffeurs are provided with supper I go into the Commandant's room and finish his packing. The ties, the pocket-handkerchiefs, and the collars are all safe in the Gladstone bag. Only the underclothing and the suits remain, and there is any amount of room for them in the hold-all.

I roll up the blue serge coat, and the trousers, and the waistcoat very smooth and tight, also the underclothes. It seems very simple. I have only got to put them in the hold-all and then roll it up, smooth and tight, too——

It would have been simple if the hold-all had been a simple hold-all and if it had been nothing more. But it was also a sleeping-bag and a field-tent. As sleeping-bag it was provided with a thick blanket which took up most of the room inside, and a waterproof sheet which was part of itself. As field-tent it had large protruding flanges, shaped like jib-sails, and a complicated system of ropes.

First of all I tucked in the jib-sails and ropes and laid them as flat as might be on the bottom of the sleeping-bag, with the blanket on the top of them. Then I packed the clothes on the top of the blanket and turned it over them to make all snug; I buttoned up the waterproof sheet over everything, rolled up the hold-all and secured it with its straps. This was only done by much stratagem and strength, by desperate tugging and pushing, and by lying flat on my waist on the rolled-up half to keep it quiet while I brought the loose half over. No sooner had I secured the hold-all by its strap than I realised that it was no more a hold-all than it was a sleeping-bag and a field-

tent, and that its contents were exposed to the weather down one side, where they bulged through the spaces that yawned between the buttons, strained almost to bursting.

I still believed in the genius that had devised this trinity. Clearly the jib-sails which made it a field-tent were intended to serve also as the pockets of the hold-all. I had done wrong to flatten them out and tuck them in, frustrating the fulfilment of their function. It was not acting fairly by the inventor.

I unpacked the hold-all, I mean the field-tent.

Then, with the Commandant's clothes again lying round me on the floor, I grappled with the mystery of the jib-sails and their cords. The jib-sails and their cords were, so to speak, the heart of this infernal triple entity.

They were treacherous. They had all the appearance of pockets, but owing to the intricate and malign relations of their cords, it was impossible to deal faithfully with them on this footing. When the contents had been packed inside them, the field-tent asserted itself as against the hold-all, and refused to roll up. And I am sure that if the field-tent had had to be set up in a field in a hurry, the hold-all and the sleeping-bag would have arisen and insisted on their consubstantial rights.

I unpacked the field-tent and packed it all over again exactly as I had packed it before, but more carefully, swearing gently and continuously, as I tugged with my arms and pushed with my knees, and pressed hard on it with my waist to keep it still. I cursed the day when I had first heard of it; I cursed myself for giving it to the Commandant; more than all I cursed the combined ingenuity and levity of its creator, who had indulged his fantasy at our expense, without a thought to the actual conditions of the retreat of armies and of ambulances.

(To be continued.)

At Neuve Chapelle

By a Sub.

It is nearly ten o'clock before orders come to move. Then the long column winds its way on to the road which here is narrow and straight. A staff officer on a bicycle passes down the column, giving the good news that the first three lines of trenches have been captured with slight loss. After the manner of his kind, the Tommy's spirits go up with a jump and he begins talking about the quarters he will occupy in Berlin next week. The road is alive with troops and movement of all kinds. Presently we turn off into a labyrinth of lanes winding this way and that; and now we are within easy range of the German artillery. It has, in fact, been so successful in shelling a certain section of the road that the order is given to move in artillery formation across the fields. However, nothing untoward happens.

Presently we come to a pleasant, sheltered meadow beside a farmstead. Here a halt is made, arms are piled, and acting on advice we prepare for a long wait. Things have gone well, so that we are not likely to move into the battle-line till to-night. It is now a mild, sunny morning, typical of early spring, the wind has gone down. With all the sounds of war and death at hand, the country-side looks peaceful enough. Two fields away a peasant is ploughing stolidly, automatically, though now and again a shell screams over his head. It is no business of his, he thinks; anyway, he must finish his spring ploughing, so on he goes.

Already wounded men are trickling down along the road to the dressing-station near by. Bloody heads and hands for the most part; not many serious cases, albeit now and then a still figure on a stretcher with chalky, quiet face speaks otherwise. The slightly-wounded Tommy, though often a humourist, is rarely an optimist. To every

query as to how he liked his job there is one reply. "It was Hell," he says with preternaturally solemn face. So they trickle by, supporting each other or supported by Red Cross orderlies. And presently there comes another procession along the road: German prisoners marching in file with an escort of French Territorials. Big, grey men of fine physique they are for the most part, yet with dull, heavy faces. Their drab uniforms and little round caps and scared expressions give them a funereal appearance as they trudge along two by two. How glad yet surprised they are to be saved! Some are Prussians, some Saxons, and there are a few Alsatians. The Prussians, it seems—an ignorant calibre of men—fully expected to be bayoneted on capture; between them and the others there is no love lost. The Alsatians, on the other hand—intelligent fellows, speaking French and English—are delighted to be taken prisoners, and speak disparagingly of their officers. All agree that the sudden onslaught had taken the Germans completely by surprise, and they thought themselves lucky enough to escape with whole skins.

Watching this passing show, we sit on a sunny bank by the roadside. All morning the batteries in the orchards, enclosures, and farmyards just behind us never cease to boom and bang. Again and again the squat, black howitzers, peeping from their screen of leaves, belch forth flame, jerk up their heads, and are immediately surrounded by their little crowd of attendant gunners. Ceaselessly overhead the aeroplanes, English and French, pass to and fro.

Suddenly, without warning, a wailing shriek rends the air. A 16-inch German shell coming! We look up. No! We are petrified. For one appalling second we watch an aeroplane, crumpled, disintegrating, hurtle five hundred feet through the air—fall like a stone to the ground.

Half-an-hour later another little procession passes along the road. Two stretchers, four bearers to each, two bodies cased in leather, inconceivably torn and battered. So the two aviators, Irving and Morgan, had died. We walked along the road and there, three hundred yards away in a rickyard, was the shapeless, twisted mass of canvas, wood, and steel that once had been an aeroplane.

Hard hit by the German guns, it had flown painfully

down to our lines, only to crumple up at safety's door. And presently, a few fields off, another aeroplane descends. This time safety has been reached by a hair's breadth. The two aviators show us their machine, smiling calmly the while. The petrol tank has a hole large enough to put your arm in. All the way from La Bassée, where the German shrapnel burst around it for half-an-hour on end, it had been leaking furiously. A narrow shave—but that is the sort of thing our aviators regard as a joke.

It is now nearly two o'clock. We eat our chocolate rations and a few sandwiches. No more news comes through, no more prisoners or wounded. But for the ammunition limbers, which constantly race along the road to replenish their batteries, nothing in particular happens. Just at this juncture, however, word arrives to move down into the reserve trenches vacated by regiments that have gone up to the firing-line. We find them in an orchard alongside a farm—good, clean trenches, newly dug.

At a wayside farmhouse, which for the nonce is brigade headquarters, our battalion halts. A bright beam of light shooting out from the doorway discloses the files of men, heavily burdened with great coats, packs, haversacks, water-bottles, entrenching tools, and equipment. Strange figures they must look in the dim light. Orderlies with steaming horses and one or two motor-cyclists are waiting outside. A long conference takes place between staff officers, the commanding officer, and the adjutant.

We move on. We pass our old trenches. We leave the road and begin to follow a light ammunition railway across fields. Eastward, the dawn breaks in streaks of ashey grey, shedding upon the countryside a cold and cheerless light. Many were there who looked upon day-break for the last time. Not a word was spoken. It was all a man could do to pick his way along the narrow track on either side of which was liquid mud. Now and again we would meet parties of weary Highlanders trudging back from the firing-line for a well-earned rest. Presently in the distance, a gun boomed. Close at hand another answered. Then one by one they took it up along the line behind. The grim business of our day had begun.

As the light grew, bullets began to whiz and hum above our heads. First occasionally, then increasingly, until the

air sang with them. Quite close now in front there was a sudden little burst of rifle fire. Across the open field we found ourselves in a road protected by a stout breastwork and fairly swarming with troops. The question now was how to find cover for the whole battalion. For already there was considerable congestion. Eventually this was done by splitting up the companies on either side of a gap in the line of sandbags through which bullets constantly whistled.

There followed a weary hour's wait. It was six o'clock. Orders had come to attack at seven. The first thing to do was to provide for the inner man. No one had had breakfast, there had been no time for that. So the men lie about eating their rations and smoking. Some take off their great coats and equipment, folding the former away in the pack; some clean their rifles and bayonets; some talk and laugh together over breakfast. The Lancashire men, who occupy the best place under the parapet of the trench, are doing likewise. And curious it is to hear at this odd moment in this odd place the intermingling of English dialects, Glasgow and Manchester, the burr of Devon, and the cockney Territorials' nasal twang.

Very soon the Germans get busy. First one shell and then another hurtles across and bursts around a half-ruined, red-brick farmstead which stands beside the road. Soon they follow each other in regular succession minute by minute, now in front of the breastwork and now behind. Men walking along the road sink down beside it suddenly, whimpering like children, holding the head or clasping the limbs with their hands. Splinters and shrapnel bullets fly in all directions. The closer to the breastwork one is, so much the safer.

Seven o'clock approaches. Word comes that the attack on the right has been launched. Word is passed down to get ready. Officers load their revolvers and button their tunics across the throat. Platoons are marshalled together and told off. "Fix bayonets!" A cold, rasping sound, and six hundred blades flash in the morning sunlight.

"Move to the right in file!" "Right turn!" "Quick march!" The orders follow each other in quick succession. No. 1 company leads the way along the shell-stricken road. A lane branches off to the left and abutting

upon it is a maze of deep, disused trenches. The commanding officer and adjutant are here, uttering last words of encouragement to the men as they file into them. Knee-deep in mud and water they are, with planks laid along the bottom here and there to afford a better footing. At the end of the winding passages we halt, awaiting the final word. The order, when it comes, is short and simple: "Advance 95 degrees left."

Company officers blow their whistles and the whole front line swarms through the gaps in the sandbag breastwork and rushes pell-mell across a hundred yards of open ground, pitted with holes, and obstructed with loose strands of barbed wire. Now the bullets sing and splutter merrily in all directions. Once across that open stretch we are in the first line of German trenches. Already they have been reversed by our infantry though the trench is shallow and the breastwork low. Indeed, the crush of troops in this section is altogether too great. Men cannot obtain shelter from the ceaseless stream of bullets. Some even have to crouch down on the top of the ground. A strapping fellow topples forward groaning into the trench, his hands clasped to his forehead from which the blood pours. Another rolls quietly over on his side—stone dead. The lad next to you, virile and strong a moment ago, now lies feebly moaning, shot through the body. Two or three others, variously wounded, sit, half-conscious, with their backs against the parapet.

And we have seen out only five minutes!

It is time for another rush. Up we clamber again, dive one by one under a loose strand of wire and stream diagonally in batches across an enclosure. No regular formation is possible in such ground—the men follow their officers as best they can. The air whistles, nay, tingles with bullets, and it is with a feeling more of surprise than anything that after each rush one reaches the other side. We find another breastwork similarly crowded with men, but better protected than the last. For the ground in front has been blown into a huge mound by the action of the British shells, and this provides adequate shelter. The mound must be at least forty feet high. Beneath it the soil has been hollowed and scarred and rent into a great cavity—a pit of horror indescribable. Here in some vast

explosion all the refuse, all the material of the neighbouring trenches seems to have fallen. Many German dead are there, grey and bloody, amid the upturned earth; by itself lies the body of a British soldier, stark and stiff, the face covered, doubtless, by some comrade's hand with a piece of white tarpaulin; the trivial things of life are there, biscuit-tins, scraps of food, hand-mirrors, the trivial things men carry in their pockets. And everywhere litter of equipment—German helmets, with the golden eagle emblazoned on the front, German caps and accoutrements, rifles, clips of bullets, pistols, and weapons of all kinds. The tradition of blood and iron has found its fitting consummation in that one place.

Through this pit we clamber and up the mound beyond; then dart along a kind of ridge. A small river or large ditch of stagnant water is bridged at one place by a plank which has broken down. It is no time to hesitate. The only thing to do is to plunge in and somehow stagger across with the filthy, brackish, greenish water lapping one's chin. Rifle and bayonet, already clogged with mud, are rendered useless. On the further bank lies a wounded officer attended by his sergeant. The country is now dead flat and open, the enemy cannot be more than three hundred yards distant. A broad stretch of ploughed field, heavy with recent rains, has to be crossed. Men fall right and left, prostrate khaki figures dot the ground in all directions. The crackle of rifle-fire freshens, the whole air hums with bullets. Burdened with our packs and weight of equipment, we can only muster a jog-trot in such heavy going. Many prefer to crawl over the ground on all fours, though this little advantages them; some pause for breath in the shell-holes, others lie down in the open.

On the far side of the ploughed field is a shallow depression in the ground. Here, the only available cover, are disposed a number of troops of various companies and regiments. Immediately in front, not 150 yards away, is a group of buildings surmounted by a tall, red-brick chimney—a landmark in all that countryside—known as the Moulin de Pietre. It looks more like a mine in one of our own colliery districts than a mill. It fairly bristles with rifles and machine-guns. The hail of bullets above our heads increases. We flatten our faces in the muddy

ground. Now and again, a machine-gun sweeps round with its clack-clack-clack, and is followed by an audible stream of bullets.

Behind us the rear companies of the battalion are still advancing. They come on in groups and batches in widely extended order. Meanwhile, we lie down in a long, irregular line which grows ever thicker, thus affording a better mark for the enemy's riflemen and artillery. So, presently, the order comes for two platoons to advance about a hundred yards to a line of temporary breastworks. We show our heads and the bullets begin to fly as thick as hail. One has to leap a ditch . . .

The sensation of being wounded is outside any ever felt before. A terrific thump in the thigh followed by a sharp stab of pain like a red-hot iron searing the flesh, then a collapse of the limbs, and you roll over as a shot rabbit might do. Like a rabbit, too, you squirm and kick as you lie on your back. A stalwart corporal drags you out of the ditch into which you have half fallen. Nor does a foot of dirty water make your appearance any the more elegant.

The hours roll by as you lie there. Presently a doctor and stretcher-bearers come up from the support-trenches. The doctor gets to work on the more serious cases, kneeling beside the prostrate figures, apparently regardless of his own life. Within five minutes he is shot through the stomach; his own stretcher-bearers carry him back. Shrapnel, in addition to rifle-fire, has now begun to burst freely. The place is growing distinctly warm. Wounded men are lying around in all directions, whimpering, groaning, silent. One active officer only is left to the company.

Regular as clockwork the shells burst within a thirty-yards radius, "whiz-bang"—a shower of earth, a playful shower of bullets. Luckily, the Germans plaster the same little area over and over again. Gradually, as the day wears on, the intensity of the bombardment increases until the battle is raging at its height. The noise is deafening, the confusion of sound indescribable. The crackle of rifle-fire, like newly-kindled wood, alternates with the metallic clack-clack of machine-guns to right and left. The hollow roar of lyddite explosions resound amid the

ruins of Aubers and Neuve Chapelle. Near at hand the high explosive "coal-boxes" burst with a flash of fire against inky-black smoke, making the earth tremble. Sulphurous fumes of lyddite rise from the ground and poison the very soil, the very atmosphere, the very water. A thousand reports, dull, piercing, deafening, rend the air—the bang-bang of our field-guns behind, the heavy boom of 4·7's and 9·2's, every few minutes an earth-quaking, thunderous roll when "Mother" or "Grannie" speak from their positions far in rear. Then there are German guns in front, and especially a howitzer double battery near at hand, firing salvoes every three minutes with maddening persistency. "Boom—boom—boom—boom, boom—boom—boom—boom." The drum of the ear tingles in anticipation of it. Ever and again the shrapnel screams across and bursts thirty yards behind, and the shells wail overhead in unending procession.

So this fiendish orgy of sound goes on far into the afternoon. There are occasional lulls. Once there is dead silence for at least a minute, when, far above, you may hear a lark sing. Then inferno breaks out again. "Bang—crash—smash." "Ping—ping—ping." "Clack—clack—clack." The man next to you, unhurt up to now, is bleeding freely from a shrapnel wound in the head.

What are one's thoughts as one lies out there with a sharp pain in the thigh, unable either to advance or retire. They are not difficult to analyse. Will the next one catch me, you think, as you flatten your face in anticipation of it. Maybe you conjure up a picture of your home in quiet England—the quietest spot you know—wondering what your friends are doing at that particular moment. It is wearing to the nerves certainly, this doing nothing. While advancing you have no time to think. You are just bent on getting to the other side. It is like crossing a crowded street—you do so with as little delay as possible. But lying down under shell-fire—even that has its monotony, and after a time you are in danger of falling off to sleep. Then comes "Jack Johnson," and the earth scattering over your neck quickly brings you back to reality.

At length an orderly crawls up with a message. "Dig yourselves in." Quickly the men get to work with their entrenching tools, each individual scraping a hole for him-

self as he lies on his stomach, after the manner of a terrier digging for a rabbit. By this time the enemy's fire has slackened. It is a long while since any supports moved up, and the firing-line is screened from the riflemen in the mill by the slight rise of the ground. Those who can among the wounded crawl slowly to the rear. We have to cross three hundred yards of open plough. About half that distance has been covered when shelling begins again in deadly earnest. One after the other, the shrapnel skims overhead to burst with a nerve-shattering crash twenty yards this side or that. Somewhere a machine-gun opens and a solid stream of bullets whistles around one's ears. A deep, round shell-hole close at hand offers the likeliest refuge. All the earth is stained yellow by the sulphurous fumes of lyddite. A long-barrelled pistol of curious shape lies in the hole. Bearing a Birmingham trade-mark, it has the appearance of an old-fashioned highwayman's weapon, a century old. One wonders whether it is a German all the same. Amid the loose earth are bits of iron and shell-casing, a piece of a horseshoe, and divers grisly human relics.

For full a quarter-of-an-hour, an inferno of fire searches the field. All the sky is dotted with puffs of smoke, white and yellow and black. The air stinks of sulphur. In the distance the faint sound of men shouting proclaims that there something is happening. Ever and anon comes the boom—boom—boom of the German howitzer battery, firing salvoes, followed by the scream of the projectiles. So the battle rages in bursts of concentrated fury. There follows another pause. The moment has come to struggle on.

. . . . . .

The modern battlefield is no place for squeamishness or sentiment. There must even be a measure of callousness to suffering and death. At the same time, no ordinarily intelligent mind can pass through such an ordeal without retaining impressions which will never fade. Nor are these entirely disagreeable impressions. When together men face a deadly peril the best that is in them comes to the surface : the spirit of comradeship is there, the will to sacrifice, a certain mutual respect.

Yet beyond these, the land of Flanders can leave but one legacy. Never was it fair to look upon, this land of dykes and ditches, of mud and water, of miserable farms and miserable people, of flat acres bordered by straight trees, of dreary villages and squalid towns. To-day the hand of war has laid it waste so that the very earth is poisonous, the very water stinks. It is as if the curse of God had fallen there. To desolation is added the stench of death.

Rupert Brooke

By Edward Thomas

On April 23rd the poet Rupert Brooke died of sunstroke at Lemnos in his twenty-eighth year. He was a second lieutenant in the Royal Naval Division, on his way to the fighting in the Dardanelles. No poet of his age was so much esteemed and admired, or was watched more hopefully. His work could not be taken soberly, whether you liked it or not. It was full of the thought, the aspiration, the indignation of youth; full of the praise of youth. Many people knew the man or the reputation of his personal charm. Wherever he went he made friends, well-wishers, admirers, adorers. He was himself a friendly man, with humour and good humour added. Successful in many fields—he played in the eleven and the fifteen for Rugby school; he won a fellowship at King's College, Cambridge; he was celebrated as a golden young Apollo, in Mrs. Cornford's phrase—

> "Magnificently unprepared
> For the long littleness of life,"—

his attractiveness included modesty and simplicity. He stretched himself out, drew his fingers through his waved, fair hair, laughed, talked indolently, and admired as much as he was admired. No one that knew him could easily separate him from his poetry: not that they were the same, but that the two inextricably mingled and helped one another. He was tall, broad, and easy in his movements. Either he stooped, or he thrust his head forward unusually much to look at you with his steady, blue eyes. His clear, rosy skin helped to give him the look of a great girl. The papers nearly all said something about his "beauty," his good looks, his "glamour"; one said that he was one of the handsomest Englishmen of our time. And just before

he died it happened that one of his last-published sonnets was quoted in St. Paul's Cathedral by the Dean :—

"If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

"And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven."

So, instantly he took his share of the fame that comes to young poets dying conspicuously and unexpectedly, but not unprophesied by themselves.

In his lifetime he was not widely known for his one book, *Poems* (1911), the essays on Donne and John Webster published in *Poetry and Drama*, and the poems published in the same quarterly, in *Georgian Poetry*, in the four parts of *New Numbers*, and here and there in the newspapers.

His poems had referred a good deal to death, long before the war began. He was so eager for enjoyment and performance worthy of a very lofty conception of life and youth, that death, and old age, and the end of love, could not but confront him prodigiously. He varied between a Shelleyan eagerness and a Shelleyan despair. It was characteristic of him to apply the Shelleyan epithet "swift" to a girl's hair. Sometimes it seemed to him he could not love; sometimes that so great was his love it would endure in his dust and haunt the mean lovers of later years :—

"In that instant they shall learn
The shattering ecstasy of our fire,
And the weak passionless hearts will burn

"And faint in that amazing glow,
Until the darkness close above;
And they will know—poor fools, they'll know!—
One moment, what it is to love."

He wrote a threnody for the "Funeral of Youth," where "fussy Joy," "Passion, grown portly, something middle-

aged," and "Ardour, the sunlight on his greying hair," were among the mourners; but not Love—"Love had died long ago." Like Shelley, he was metaphysical. One of his poems was the result of an effort to look at the world, another to see God, like a fish; while a third spoke of the cold life of the herring, but ended:—

"He has his hour, he has his hour."

The "eternal instant," the "immortal moment," troubled his mind. He was discontented with its rareness, and even in the midst of one such moment, before exclaiming—

"Heart of my heart, our heaven is now, is won!"

he must yet remember—

"Through glory and ecstasy we pass;
Wind, sun, and earth remain, the birds sing still,
When we are old, are old. . . ."

Yet he would turn from metaphysical Platonising to very substantial enumeration of the things he loved:—

"So, for their sakes I loved, ere I go hence,
And the high cause of love's magnificence,
And to keep loyalties young, I'll write those names
Golden for ever, eagles, crying flames,
And set them as a banner, that men may know,
To dare the generations, burn, and blow
Out on the wind of Time, shining and streaming. . . ."

The list includes tea-cups and peeled sticks as well as rainbows.

He celebrated the beauty and quiet of Grantchester, near Cambridge, and in a Berlin café thought of the honey for tea there. He was not going to stop short at youth any more than at vegetarianism, or walking barefoot in the dust, or bathing in the winter in the Cam. He was beginning not only to enjoy things as mortals do, but perhaps to be content to do so. It had long been true of him what he said of Donne: that "humour was always at his command. It was part of his realism, especially in the bulk of his work, his poems dealing with love." He turned to—

"Lips that fade, and human laughter,
And faces individual,
Well this side of Paradise. . . ."

and remarked—

"There's little comfort in the wise."

He did not attain the "Shelleyan altitude where words have various radiance rather than meaning," but perhaps no poet better expressed the aspiration towards it and all the unfulfilled eagerness of ambitious self-conscious youth. His promise is more generally spoken of, but it was a rare and considerable achievement to have expressed and suggested in so many ways the promise of youth.

When the war came to Europe, apparently a minor peace came to his heart, not with imagined "love's magnificence," but ridding him of "all the little emptiness of love," in a new life of which he wrote:—

"Oh! we, who have known shame, we have found release there,
Where there's no ill, no grief, but sleep has mending,
Naught broken save this body, lost but breath;
Nothing to shake the laughing heart's long peace there
But only agony, and that has ending;
And the worst friend and enemy is but Death."

He felt safe, "and if these poor limbs die, safest of all." His reputation is safe: it was never greater than now, when he stands out clearly against that immense, dark background, an Apollo not afraid of the worst of life.

How I Discovered the Date of the World War

By Major de Brézé Darnley-Stuart-Stephens

"And *now*, the ripe pear—poor, little, hapless Belgium—is doomed to drop into the capricious Teutonic maw." Thus the writer soliloquised, as he lowered his No. 8 Zeiss field glasses. For he had just been witnessing the first offensive act of the world's war of 1914 *ad sec.* One as truly so, as if it had been precluded by a brutal demand for submission to the savage will, followed by the instant surge forward of the slay and spare not host of the twentieth century Huns. It was at a quarter to three on the afternoon of October the third, the year before last, that I saw the last spike driven into the last chair of the five and a half miles long line that completed the *mésalliance* between the railway systems of Germany and its destined prey.

That evening at Liège, as I stepped on board the train for Brussels and Ostend, I observed to Mr. T——, an impenitent provider of rifles for "cash and no questions asked": "If I were you, my dear fellow, I would send the ladies of my family to Brighton next summer instead of Blankenberghe, for of a surety on the next August English Bank Holiday, the German monster will spring."

The ridiculous horn cut short my useless warning, the train slowly curved out of the Gare de Midi, the eminent arms merchant, who had that week clinched, on sufficiently satisfactory terms, a deal in obsolete Lee-Metfords with a military expert from Belfast, smiled, and his parting words were, as my carriage window swept past a wonderful blue suit and a still more wonderful blue felt bowler: "These Germans don't want war, they only want to make more good business." "Good business, more and more business, *toujours les affaires sont les affaires*," I mused, "these unsuspecting Belgians, like pussy with the escaped canary!

Germany seeks to hypnotise the luckless neighbour before pouncing on her."

The variety of military problems which present themselves to the "corrector of military statistics"—a Continental aphorism for an officer in quest of up-to-date information in the territory of a potential enemy—is infinite, and the application of hard and fast rules will in no wise lessen his difficulties.

This is one of the reasons why so few works have been written concerning the procurement of military intelligence. One of the most notable chiefs in the past of the German Army, in his monumental treatise, *Der Dienst des Generalstabes*, has delivered himself of certain weighty pronouncements on the right and the wrong way of stealing a future antagonist's "thunder." Also, General Bronsart von Schellendorf has, in this *magnum opus* of his, made a special point of describing the proper mode of putting salt on the tails of suspected foreign spies. Singularly enough, His Excellency, the sometime Prussian Minister of War, lamentably failed to apply his own nostrums to the detection of such fearful wild fowl when I enjoyed (with, I fear, my tongue in my cheek) the delectation of being entertained by this Argus-eyed servant of the Kaiser in the spring of the year of grace 1897.* This by the way.

But a few weeks past, Sir Robert Baden-Powell published his personal experiences in the domain of military espionage. Now, these two works, one ponderous, albeit somewhat disappointing in its matter, the other as slim in its proportions as the cute dodges it inculcates, represent the whole modern technical literature of the science of—let us call it Spyology. For a profound secrecy envelops the measures by which each nation prosecutes its unceasing struggle for information as to the fighting position of its neighbours. Were it otherwise the greater part of such work would be thrown away. Until the arrival of the inevitable world war, one felt himself precluded from writing as to methods of obtaining intelligence in a foreign State, but now that the fat is in the international fire, I can conceive no further restraint, beyond that of hurting

* See "On Secret Service in Germany," ENGLISH REVIEW, March, 1915.

Teutonic vanity—a consideration that scarcely applies. Here, then, is a concrete instance of how, for the second time in my graceless life, I wiped the eye of the much-overrated German War Office Intelligence Bureau. All things considered, I cannot help nourishing a morsel of sympathy for the indignant and aggrieved Hun who expressed to the lamented General Sir James Grierson, when my outrageous re-intrusion on to the sacred soil of the Fatherland was being discussed, that my conduct showed clearly that I was "a most unscrupulous character." My want of scruples will be evidenced by the shameless tale here unfolded. It has ever been to the writer a source of pious joy, when dealing with Teutonic officialdom, to play with that aching void where humour doth not reside. From the Treaty of Westphalia to that of Vienna, the Low Countries have been the theatre of European warfare, and it is sometimes forgotten that in all these campaigns there was a British Army available and strong enough to turn the scale. At the period of the Agadir incident, the true relations between Germany, France, and England seemed to make themselves clear, and certain indications of German staff policy pointed to a coming struggle for domination in Belgium.

The sentence of imprisonment in a fortress as a delicate tribute of the Imperial High Court of Leipzig to my activities, in 1896–7, in the chief town of the barbarous tribes of Central Europe weighed little when, in the July of 1911, I determined to see what the Germans were doing in the development of their railway network converging on the land that had been given over to sword and fire. In order to report upon a railway, one must be able to recognise and describe different types of locomotives, the nature of their wheels, couplings and cylinders, storage and water, brakes with which fitted, description of buffers, etc. In the case of other vehicles, the weight, length, and carrying capacity for men and horses must be noted. Then, again, the officer who proposes to find out what is useful about the arteries of war—the steel roads—must observe the local methods of signalling and working trains, shape and weight of rails, and method of attachment to sleepers, details concerning watering of engines and their repair, and, of course, the nature of gradients and curves—information indis-

pensable this last when calculating the number of troop trains to be used for a mobilisation *en masse*.

This was but a tithe of what I set myself to learn before embarking on my second Germanic invasion, for it had been my experience, in the devious way of clandestine research, that opportunities had often occurred of acquiring valuable information which could not be taken full advantage of, owing to the seeker's lack of technical knowledge. This is even more depressing than the inability to get hold of what one requires. Fortunately, it so happened that a brother-in-law of the writer, Mr. James Bland, had been for many years a Director of the London and North-Western Railway, and, owing to a species of family connection with that great line, I was enabled to pick up a fair share of "railway-man" knowledge, and I may say that I found that railway officials were never unwilling to explain things to an interested inquirer.

At Liège, in July, 1911, I foregathered, in my temporary character as a new journalist, with a party of American tourists with whom I unobtrusively mingled *en route* for Aix-la-Chapelle, the concentration point for the quartette of Army Corps which, when war was decided upon, was to be launched upon Belgium. I knew that if I travelled *alone* the odds were in favour of being "spotted," and that my only chance of escaping detection was by travelling as one of a crowd. This specific, although it had not received the benediction of that great and wise man, General von Schellendorf, worked like a charm. Between the Belgian frontier and Aix I saw what convinced me that Germany was, in familiar parlance, putting up a bluff. For her strategic railway development had not made sufficient progress to permit of a surprise raid as the initial act of war. Two links were wanting—the construction of a short line to connect the border towns of Malmedy and Stavelot and that of one to join Malmedy with Weymertz—the station immediately west of Weismes. The building of this last line was an imperative necessity, although not to the eye of the casual traveller, for I discovered that the line it would supersede, that of Aix to St. Vitti, had, with true German craft, been carried out in the most slipshod manner, the object being to show that "here was no military line." It found its way at one point through a long and easily

blocked tunnel, and I saw that until the Germans had built an alternative route which would have obviated a tunnel, no war need be looked for. Let me explain this matter of the laying down a couple of short railways without whose existence the 160,000 troops to be entrained at Coblentz, Cologne, Bonn, and Gladbach, could not be secretly projected on the Belgian frontier.

And absolute secrecy was the essence of the operation, which was hurriedly to rush from far inland *via* Aix-la-Chapelle an overwhelming force without the Belgians knowing what was coming. On my return, unscathed, to London, I, at Mr. Edgar Wallace's request, wrote in a now defunct evening paper a series of articles, commencing on September 9th, 1911, giving my impressions of the deadly peril in which Belgium stood. Under the heading of when and how "Germany will Strike," I said: "The jumping-off place for the incursion into unhappy Belgium will be Aix-la-Chapelle, as it is the nearest station to the Belgian border which has a sufficient platform area to allow of the immediate entrainment of some 28,000 bayonets and 82 guns, being the advance guard of the Northern Army. When 'Krieg' is flashed from the Great Central Staff a procession of trains will start to travel for some four hours south and parallel with the Belgian frontier, and then about three in the morning a point will be reached where lies the Belgian life artery—the Malmedy and Stavelot road. The severing of this artery will mean the bleeding of Belgium to death.

"Simultaneously with this departure from Aix a mounted force of 2,400 sabres and eighteen horse artillery guns will start from the strategic camp of Elsenborn for Libremont, which ought to be reached in four hours, and captured by a *coup de main*. This independent cavalry operation will relieve from dangerous congestion the troops destined for Chaufontein and its sister forts—the huge sum for the construction of which might as well have been cast into the Meuse or on to the tables at Ostend."

And in reference to the use by the enemy of monster siege ordnance, I wrote, "As the German plan of campaign is based upon the occupation, with lightning-like swiftness, of South-eastern Belgium, it may be taken for granted that

the guns will, immediately after the fall of Liège, be forwarded to a position just *outside* the extreme range of the Namur eastern crescent of cupola forts."

Surely there is no ambiguity in these lines. Here was a sufficient warning, so little taken heed of, however, that the moment the 1911 scare had blown over, the Belgian Government was engaged in arranging *to halve with the Germans* the cost of the line necessary for the latter to arrive in front of Liège.

The year following, I hit upon another secret link in the German scheme for the overrunning of her little neighbour. And that was that in May, 1912, a new double-railed line had been constructed at immense cost through a region in which exists neither population nor commerce to justify even the building of a tramway. This connecting link with the Cologne–Treves line has never been opened for public traffic. Its very existence was concealed. They can do those things in Germany.

The writing on the wall was there for everyone to read. Between the great German advanced base of Elsenborn and St. Vitti mountains of railway material had been accumulated to be used for pre-arranged junctions with the Belgian lines, and which made it plain to me that the enemy was not depending alone on the completion of the fateful Stavelot-Malmedy line. The Walloon inhabitants (a charming people who were afraid to express themselves in their mother tongue outside their comfortable little cottages) told me in guarded whispers that three battalions of Engineers from Nassau were working all night by electric light* in augmenting the sidings at Cornely-Munster, Raeren, Rötgen, and Lamesdorf.

There was no local traffic to justify more than a single "down" and "up" platform at any of these little country stations. The trains were few and run at long intervals. I never counted more than a score of passengers, and that on a fair day, and as for goods traffic, it was non-existent. The two modest sidings for coal-trucks that I had noticed when I was in Germany on a secret mission in 1896–7 had, in each of these stations, grown into a perfect network of mobilisation platforms, each half a mile in length, and

* I counted one night, in an hour and twenty-eight minutes' train-travel, eleven superposed "fixed beams" in use.

(significant fact) equipped with hydraulic turn-tables. These "signs of the times" spelt that here, at Montjoie and St. Vitti, 150,000 men could be concentrated within a few hours. One had only to work a simple sum in mensuration to discover that landing spaces for that number of invaders were being hurriedly provided. "*Nous n'aimons pas les Allemands*," muttered a sturdy Walloon farmer, who travelled back with me from the forbidden region to that once happy, jovial Birmingham of Belgium, Liège, "they have given me notice that, before next quarter-day, I have to take myself and my family elsewhere. You see," he said, with a meaning shrug, "my house is too near the new railway extension from Weywertz to Malmedy." Again the writing on the wall.

It seemed to me when I had successfully concluded my intrusion into the forbidden border-land, that Belgium was going to repeat the blunder of August, 1831, wholly due to over-confidence. King Leopold I. had said she "would not survive a repetition of the mistake."

In October, 1913, the pitcher proceeded once again to the well and, as these lines would seem to show, effected an unbroken return. From my old base of operations, the world's mart of unreliable fowling-pieces, obsolete rifles, and cheap imitations of standard revolvers and "automatics," I threw myself in a skirmishing line into the sealed territory past the little fort-crowned, sleepy hollow of Chaud Fontaine, and there, greatly fearing the Prussian tap on the shoulder, saw the opening to traffic of that epoch-making five and a half mile "one-horse railway" between the oft-mentioned Malmedy and Stavelot. And from what I learned from sure sources, and saw with my own eyes, I calculated that, at the feverish haste with which it was progressing, the new high-level line, costing nearly four million pounds, between Weywertz and Malmedy, would be finished in the second week of June, 1914. And, sure enough, German oversea reservists were secretly warned for mobilisation, the destined date being June 18th. I venture to believe that especial date had less to do with the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo (which, of course, the Germans won handsomely) than that it signalled the completion by those charming people of the last of the strategic railways meant for the overwhelming of Belgium

and Northern France. When I returned to London from my very last trans-Meuse expedition, I happened to mention aridly that Germany will invade Belgium next danger month day, *i.e.*, August Bank Holiday. In the expressive idiom of Manhattan, I recommended the sometime Editor of the *Fortnightly* and *Saturday* to "search me."

In allowing herself to be half-bullied, half-cajoled into helping to provide her own whipping-rod, Belgium exhibited a degree of national folly which was as pitiable as was her punishment.

Incredible as it may appear to the general reader, this most unfortunate of little nations subscribed more than half of the sum required for the forging of that missing link between Malmedy and Stavelot. More wonderful still, she entirely, out of her own money, constructed the costly tunnel on the northern side of the townlet of Stavelot, the only purpose of which was to connect the new German network of rails with the main Belgian line from Pepinster *via* Spa and Stavelot to the frontier junctions of Goury and Libremont. The people of Liège and Namur were the principal contributors of the many Belgian francs which were spent in excavating that subterranean passage to their doors, a passage through which it was fondly hoped would flow an ever-increasing tide of German trade. And these same hypnotised burghers have since learnt in blood and travail that the oncoming wave of prosperity was in an hour converted by the malign Hunnish deities into one of overwhelming destruction.

Weapons and Tactics

By Lisle March Phillipps

DURING the last hundred years a revolution in armaments has taken place with the nature of which we are all familiar. What we are not, perhaps, so familiar with is the influence which this revolution has had, and is having, on tactics. Tactics, it must be remembered, are naturally adapted to the weapons which happen to be in use. A change in weapons signifies, therefore, a change in tactics. We are now in the position of having to discover and apply a science of tactics to fit modern weapons, and in proportion as the weapons are new and unprecedented, so also will the tactics generated by them bear the same novel character. Our generals in the field are working out this new science as a matter of practice, while we at home are looking on with an interest which, though keen, would probably be keener were our knowledge of the subject greater. It is not the writer's intention to dabble in military technicalities, but there is one broad and general distinction between ancient weapons and modern, and ancient tactics and modern, which can very easily be distinguished and which it may be helpful to consider. It consists in the fact that ancient weapons were entirely destructive, whereas modern weapons are, in a preponderating degree, protective.

This is the new factor which has entered into the science of war, and the influence of which will predominate, and is predominating, in the evolution of the new school of tactics. We are apt to overlook it because what most appeals to us is the more obvious and immediate destructive capacity of the scientific weapon. This it is which captures our attention to the exclusion of all else. The triumphs of science are always imposing, for in this vague world a complexity which is never irrelevant and an ingenuity which never wanders from the point are striking in proportion to their rarity. But when, to the

usual mechanical prestige, is added the deadly intention of the modern firearm the effect is overwhelming. Such intellectual exactitude, such accuracy of thought devoted to the act of killing, must needs, we conjecture, achieve appalling and unprecedented results. If a modern reaping machine cuts quicker than the old-fashioned sickle because it embodies a keener intelligence, must not a magazine rifle, for the same reason, kill quicker than the ancient bill or battle-axe? The argument would appear to be incontrovertible, and the more we see and hear of the subject the less reason there seems to doubt it. The very aspect of a modern gun proclaims its sinister efficiency, and the reports which reach us of its performance in the field confirm the impression.

What we overlook is the fact that weapons dictate tactics, and that it is tactics more than weapons which decide the character of war. It may be the case that the tactics dictated by the more formidable weapon may be less destructive than those dictated by the less formidable. It does not follow, because a magazine rifle is a more scientifically efficient weapon than the savage's knife, that a war waged with the rifle must be bloodier than one waged with the knife. On the contrary, the reverse is true, the scientific weapon, owing to the tactics it enforces, being much less destructive than the primitive weapon. Not as a figure of speech, but as a fact, "war to the knife" is a much bloodier business than war to the Lee-Enfield. This, indeed, is so much the case that every decisive improvement in the character of weapons has effected an immediate diminution of bloodshed, and the seeming paradox is actually true that the better and more scientifically adapted a weapon is for killing, the harder it is to kill with it. If the reader doubt it, let him picture the opposed armies in Belgium and France armed with what probably was the deadliest weapon ever used—the short, straight, heavy, two-edged sword of the Romans. The result would be that the slaughter would be reckoned in millions and that the war would be over in twenty-four hours.

It will be observed that modern science has devoted itself exclusively to the improvement of missile weapons. Hand-to-hand weapons are much what they always were. The bayonet, the lance, the sword are no more effective

than the corresponding and but slightly differing weapons of the Assyrian, the Egyptian, the Greek, or the Roman, and are much on a par with the Dervish's spear or the Redskin's tomahawk of the present time. On this side the only steps in advance discernible are those which separate the flint age from the iron. The opportunities of metal and muscle are obvious as well as limited. They are restricted in the main to striking and thrusting; that is to say, to the edge and the point, to which may be added the mere weight of the club or mace. On these motives practically all hand-weapons have been developed, and, since all possibilities on these lines are apparent to common-sense and best taught by practice, it follows that hand-weapons in all ages have been about on an equality.

Widely different has been the case with missile weapons. The opportunities of scientific invention offered by the investigation of explosive power, by the application of that power to the projectile, by the treatment of the projectile itself and its adaptation to the various purposes of crushing obstacles and killing men, have been constantly progressive. Only during the past century has science developed its ingenuity, and those who have walked over the field of Waterloo may judge of its achievement within that space of time. They will remember the pigmy dimensions of the battlefield and the almost ludicrous proximity in which the French guns must have stood to the British infantry they were shelling. Armed with the smallest of our projectile weapons (the automatic pistol), the soldiers would have destroyed every French gunner in a few minutes. Those guns which pitched their round shot with considerable inaccuracy some three or four hundred yards have given place to the various forms of modern field-gun and howitzer which not only employ shrapnel at six or seven miles' distance, and high explosive shell at a considerably longer range, but shoot, moreover, with such exactitude that even a small target can at such a distance be subjected to a concentrated and deadly fire. In the same way the old Brown Bess of the Waterloo period, which shot clumsily at an enemy whom you could engage in conversation, has yielded to a rifle which lays low what appears to be a speck on the distant hillside.

For missile weapons, then, science has done wonders,

for hand weapons it has done nothing; and the natural consequence of this is that in modern warfare the missile weapon has taken over the conduct of affairs. Not only has it ousted the hand weapon from its pride of place as the arbiter of combat, but it has, as the result of this, ousted the hand weapon's tactics also and substituted its own. This means a new kind of warfare, a warfare with its own characteristic dangers and difficulties, all of which are the natural outcome of the use of missiles, and all of which, being novel and dramatic in their action, are hastily assumed to increase war's dreadfulness. But it also means the extinction of another kind of war which also had its own peculiar characteristics resulting from its dependence on hand weapons; and what we have to do, before we allow our imagination to be carried away by the killing capacity of modern armaments, is to compare the methods of the old style of hand-to-hand warfare which has gone out with the new style of missile warfare which has come in.

If we do this we shall, perhaps, find our views so altered that the most deadly of long-range guns, with all its elaborate mechanism for hurling the largest projectile the longest possible distance, will seem less malignant than humane. At least its defensive will eclipse its offensive capacity. For what, after all, is long-range execution compared to the execution of close quarters? In the hand-to-hand days, to be once engaged meant, for the bulk of the combatants, destruction or victory. The defeated side was, as a rule, annihilated. It had no opportunity, no room, for retreat. Ere yet the crisis was declared both sides were in closest contact and more or less involved with each other. Only on such terms were they effective. By all their hopes of victory they were impelled to close and grapple with the foe. And when, under these circumstances, victory declared itself on the stronger side, and the weaker was pressed back and finally overborne, what chance had it of retiring in some sort of order and saving the residue of its forces? Its stronger enemy was upon it and had it by the throat. It could not, in our sense of the word, *retreat* at all. It might fly; its individual members, realising the hopelessness of the struggle, might fling shield and sword away and chance a race for bare life with

the enemy straining at their heels. This was the fate of the vanquished. They were not forced back, or pushed from one position to another, they were shattered and scattered once for all. The country round was sown with fugitives gasping in flight or crouching in reeds and ditches. The strongest in fight were strongest in pursuit, and it was in the pursuit, when the beaten side were being run down by their adversaries, that the carnage was accomplished and the dreadful "fruits of victory," anticipated with a fearful expectancy, were gathered in.

Victory, in short, in the old days meant massacre. It meant massacre because the defeated army was delivered into the hands of its enemy and could not extricate itself; and it could not extricate itself because, the only weapons used being close-quarter weapons, the two sides had to become involved in order to strike. The bloodiness of ancient battles was, in fact, the inevitable result of the tactics dictated by the weapons used.

From a catastrophe of this kind the gun and rifle have in great measure delivered us. We are dealing, of course, with purely physical, not with moral, considerations. It is certain that modern weapons make far greater demands upon the resolution of combatants than ancient. They require a higher, less animal, more intellectual order of courage. To lay a gun or time a fuse under shell-fire involves evidently an intrepidity far more perfect and refined than is needed in a hand-to-hand combat. Moreover, under the old conditions the best or worst was alike soon over, whereas in modern battles the issue may be spun out for weeks and months, during all which time the combatants are subject to the nerve-wearing effects of *cold* danger, or danger which threatens without exciting. Just as modern armaments are essentially an outcome of science and of thought, so do they require for their proper manipulation gifts of character of the same quality. What we are here concerned with, however, is the purely destructive power of these weapons which, though apparently greater, is, in actual practice, much less than that of the primitive weapon. Nowadays, an army beaten is not necessarily destroyed. It retires, usually in good order, with the loss of a percentage of its numbers, perhaps not greater than it inflicts, and takes up its stand at the next favourable

position. If again worsted, it again retires, and this manœuvre it can carry out an indefinite number of times, varying the performance by occasional advances, and never suffering from massacre or losing more than a limited number of men, whether the issue be successful or otherwise.

Its immunity is due to the fact that its operations are conducted under the protection of modern weapons. Armed, as both sides are, with rifles effective at a mile and guns carrying from five to ten times that distance, no actual engagement or intermingling takes place. The hostile forces press upon each other by the weight of their fire, but they are not, save at rare points, in physical contact. Missiles decide it. Hence, when it becomes evident to one side that the dispositions of the other are superior, and that it is itself getting the worst of it and likely to get more the worst of it still if it goes on fighting, it is able to break off the battle just at the critical moment, when in old days the massacring would have begun, and draw back to another position. Its advanced troops retire steadily, protected by machine guns and rifle fire from points of vantage, while its skilfully disposed batteries so pound the intermediate space as to hold the foe in check and entirely prevent the intimate and deadly embrace of the battles of long ago. No doubt much depends on position and generalship, but if the former offers normal opportunities and the latter is up to the average standard, the weapons will usually do the rest. It is noticeable that, under these circumstances, "defeats" are almost unknown. Events occur which in the old days would have been defeats and would, for the defeated side, have meant extermination, but thanks to the benign intervention of the guns, no such consequences now ensue. The beaten general reports that, for purely strategic reasons, he is carrying out certain evolutions in a more or less retrograde direction. He retires in good order, he averts disaster, he preserves his army, and, finally, he establishes himself where he may expect better fortune or await reinforcements with equanimity. And for all these advantages he has to thank the scientific perfection of the missile weapons in use.

It is unsatisfactory to write of events which are as yet

imperfectly known to us, but when the details of the present campaign are revealed it will, perhaps, appear that the retreat from Mons furnishes about the best example of the defensive power of missile weapons on record. Although our knowledge is imperfect, yet we do know that the enemy on that occasion outnumbered our own forces overwhelmingly, and we also know that, since to turn the French left was his object, his energy and strength were peculiarly directed to breaking the British force which occupied that position. Finally, we know that his efforts, though driven home with undeniable courage and maintained until his men were dropping with exhaustion, ended in failure. The attack, indeed, forced us back repeatedly—so much the shock of numbers was bound to do—but, though willing to pay any price for such a consummation, it could not break us. We were beaten and buffeted for a week, and we were a winning force at the end of it.

This result was more particularly a triumph for the rifle. It is acknowledged that we were heavily out-gunned, and although such artillery as we had was devotedly served, our riflemen could not receive from this arm the full amount of protection to which they were entitled. Again, the tension was from time to time relieved by the cavalry, but an advance of the weight and solidity of that with which we had to contend is with great difficulty impeded by cavalry. Our infantry were helped by the cavalry and helped by the guns, but it remains true that the main responsibility of preserving the army was laid on their own shoulders, and that the final result of the retreat and the survival of the British contingent was the result of the way in which the British foot soldier had handled his rifle.

The capacity of the weapon was never better displayed. For one thing, it may be said to suit the temperament of our soldiers. Different kinds of valour have each their own weapons. Romantic valour—the valour which never counts its foes, the valour whose deeds invest the idea of war with a perpetual grace and beauty and are caught up and sung by poets in after ages—turns by instinct to the lance and sword:

> "In helm arrayed, with lance and blade,
> And plumes in the gay wind dancing,"

conveys the spirit of its action. But there is another kind of

valour, less pictorial, perhaps, but more practical, which counts carefully both its enemies and its cartridges, intent upon driving a hard bargain for its life and inflicting upon the enemy the last degree of mischief which the opportunity offers. Perhaps the reader may remember the remark of an English soldier, reported in a letter from the Front at the time of the retreat with which we are dealing. "This," said the rifleman, surveying the massed ranks of the enemy approaching within point-blank range, "is *real jam*." No words could better express the delight, obliterating all sense of personal danger, with which the speaker recognised his opportunity of hitting his enemy hard. It is possible, I say, that this kind of courage may not be so picturesque as the romantic order, but, without doubt, it is the best kind for exploiting the qualities of the rifle, and it is the kind in which Englishmen excel. Accordingly it was found, in this memorable retreat, that the rifle was able to bear the strain imposed by an overwhelming attack met by inferior numbers and an inferior artillery. The test applied was the severest possible; indeed, the conditions might almost seem to render inevitable that final rout, disintegration, and smash-up of our force which was the object of the enemy's tactics. The rifle, however, saved us. Had we been using close-quarter weapons it is obvious that, however obstinate the defence, the enemy must have achieved his aim in the first day's fighting. To fight at all we should have had to close, and had we once closed numbers would have done their work, and nothing worth having of our army would have emerged alive.

What, therefore, I would point out is that, even in this series of actions in which the power of the rifle is so well demonstrated, it is its protective rather than its destructive power which is most emphasised. Descriptions of the effects wrought on a massed attack by a blizzard of bullets, carefully reserved and delivered with the punctuality and dispatch in keeping with the instincts of a nation of shopkeepers, may seem to convey only an impression of the rifle's talent for destruction. But a moment's consideration is sufficient to show that, even at these moments, the weapon was saving many more lives than it was sacrificing. It sacrificed a regiment or two, but it saved an army. Sir John French's force, after the first week's fighting, owed

its existence to the fact that the struggle had been fought with missile weapons.

But, indeed, the very briefest survey of the great actions of history is sufficient to show that destruction is the essential characteristic of hand weapons and that the protective use of weapons only occurred when guns and rifles have revolutionised the art of war. It is needless to multiply instances, but perhaps the most remarkable of the whole series of Eastern and Western combats was the struggle in which Arab pretensions to undertake the task of the civilisation of Europe were finally disposed of. The conflict was to decide, not past disputes, but future opportunities. It was for the Roman heritage, for the privilege of directing the development of the West, that the two sides were engaged. The combat, in short, bore an essential likeness to the present war, in that the Arabs, like the Germans, were intent upon the introduction of their own "Kultur." A consciousness of the magnitude of the event seems to have animated the combatants. The battle lasted for seven days, and when at last Western tenacity and discipline triumphed over Eastern fury, the question at issue had been answered once for all. There was no Arab army left to argue the case. The monkish chronicle, which assesses the Christian loss at 1,007 and the Moslem at 375,000, may be of the romantic order, but one can imagine that some such terrible disparity must have existed where retreat for the vanquished was well-nigh impossible and the thirst for slaughter of the victors wholly insatiable. In any case, the result was decisive. The designs of the East upon the West were disposed of in a single battle. Henceforth the Arab race might infest or ravage the Mediterranean promontories and islands, but with the vanishing of the imperial dream which had lured it into France went also the spirit of energy which had been its inspiration; losing heart, it degenerated into communities of pirates, which preyed, as it were in jealousy, on the civilisation from which a single bloody engagement had for ever ejected it.

The object of all of us is, I suppose, to attain to some appreciation of war as at present waged, to form an intelligible idea of the forces at work, and the consequent

tactics of the forces engaged. This we shall never do unless we conceive of modern weapons as, in the main, weapons of defence. We carry with us estimates of war which have been based upon the offensive capacity of weapons. These estimates have now to be modified. From all we have heard and read we have learnt to attach a certain meaning to military terms and to expect them to occur in an intelligible sequence. Victory and defeat, attack and defence, advance and retreat, bear in our minds a certain relation to each other, and when this is broken our ideas on all the processes of war are dislocated, and we seem to be watching evolutions which lack coherence. It is so with the present campaign.

The aspect, indeed, of the present campaign should sufficiently declare its character. It is not without reason that its tactics are likened to siege tactics, for in the scheme of defence every knoll is a redoubt, every crest a battlement, and every green slope a glacis. Positions are planned on such a scale as nature alone can offer to match the range of the weapons used. Of physical obstruction there is little. The impediment to attack consists in the fire-capacity which dominates valley and plain. By an intelligent use of the scenery each army creates for itself an extensive sanctuary out of which its attacking parties issue, and towards which its retreating parties retire with the same confidence which, in old days, a fortress's walls imparted to their garrison. The position once prepared, a certain sense of security, like the calm which inhabits the heart of a cyclone, is established in the midst of danger. Men's thoughts, such is the prevailing invulnerability, turn to the occupations of peace. Music-halls are established and draw their nightly audiences, convalescent hospitals offer rest to tired nerves, the smoothest meadows are used for football, and are now, no doubt, being turned into cricket pitches, and there was even some talk among the British contingent of importing a pack of hounds and starting a hunt. And all this, the like of which was never yet seen in war, is due to the protection afforded by modern weapons. The peace which reigns even in the midst of war is a peace of the guns. It is guaranteed by what Colonel May calls "the deadly logic of the flat trajectory." Games are played and songs sung, the tired soldier rests and

amuses himself because rifles kill at a mile and guns at six or seven.

The aspect of the fighting line itself bears the same testimony. Even there peace of a kind prevails. The two armies, we are told, have buried themselves so effectively that the landscape seems deserted. Not a head appears. The men are glued to their trenches. What holds them? The answer is given by the occasional whine of a bullet or screech of a shell. The influence which, like a kite over a covey of birds, broods over both armies, driving them to cover and forcing them to observe a reluctant truce, is again the modern firearm. Nine-tenths of the energy of the troops is employed, not on the effort to destroy, but in the effort to escape destruction. Fighting is intermittent, but the digging never ceases. They burrow towards each other. Inch by inch they drive tunnels and explode mines. Only by a month's use of the spade can they achieve half an hour's use of the bayonet. By every instinct of their character and profession they are impelled to fight, but they cannot do so owing to the nature of their weapons. A spell is laid upon them so potent as to be able to hold them back, though close enough in their trenches to hear each other's voices. Exceptions will be cited and no doubt such must occur in a four hundred mile front. But the reader will acknowledge, if he considers what would assuredly happen if hand weapons were in use, that they prove the rule: the rule being that modern weapons are essentially, and in a quite unprecedented degree, weapons of defence.

It has been suggested that the civilisation we have evolved is of such a character, at once so complicated and so powerful, that we have ended by becoming the creatures of that which we have created. Instead of our running civilisation, it is civilisation which runs us. That, at least, is true of modern armaments. Guns and rifles were invented for men to use, but they are using men. They are more and more assuming control of troops in the field and dictating a science of tactics in accordance with their own character. The keynote of their tactics is their defensive object. In considering, therefore, and endeavouring to understand modern war, it is more and more in the defensive capacity of the weapons used that we must seek a clue.

Labour and the War

By H. M. Tomlinson

Anyone with experience of labour troubles must have seen with dismay the campaign begin against the slackness and bad habits of the working-class at such a time as this. It was a charge softened, of course, after a sweeping accusation, by the friendly qualification that it concerned only a small minority. The qualification, however, was followed by statistics, supplied by employers, to show that the charge was indeed general, and that the qualification was given with a wink to the knowing ones. This was the old game. One knew it well. But what was the object of playing it now? Who was it hoped to gain, and what did they hope to gain? And what would be the effect on the men on whose sustained industry at home the success of the Fleet and the armies depended? And what would the men in the trenches think of their mates who refused to keep them supplied? Unless the letters in the Press were fakes, we know what the soldiers thought. They thought they were being betrayed. They thought while they were dying their old pals were playing football and getting drunk. Here was a cleavage beginning in the democracy which would separate the men who stayed at home to make the guns from the men who went to France to use them. Was it this that some people were anxious to see? It will have been observed by the careful that, curiously enough, the soldiers in France never wrote to say they were angry because, while they were away saving the State, their wives and children were being robbed at home by the mongers of coal and foodstuffs. No. The soldiers never seemed to have noticed that; or else their letters on that subject were not thought of sufficient public interest by some discriminating editors.

It is a perilous time for the playing of this old game, so familiar to all who have taken the least interest in labour affairs. In the past, when nothing was possible but

a very unlikely revolution, it did not matter. When British shipowners, because of an incurable shyness in offering their countrymen a reasonable wage, were anxious to show a public (which might dislike the idea of the ships of the red ensign being manned by potential enemies and Asiatics) that the Britisher himself was an undesirable wretch, they threw beer over him, to make him smell unpleasant to his fellows; and nobody protested. And certainly, even before he smelt of too much drink, the sailor was not a really lovable character. The British shipowners form probably the richest and most powerful commercial interest in the community; but in the process of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest (an economic law which is undoubtedly of the good God, like green-fly, though it does not appear in the Beatitudes), the inducement offered to the men of a maritime nation to keep the flag flying was as low as the need and shiftlessness of the lowest of the labouring class compelled them to see was better than nothing; and as low as the educated intelligence of officers could accept without open shame. There is something much more dangerous to the community than a habit of tippling, and that is a deliberate meanness in rewarding service rendered by men who must accept whatever offers or starve, for it disheartens them and destroys their initiative. Of the general deterioration in the ability and steadiness of merchant service crews, owing to the fact that acceptance of the rewards offered in that service turned away intelligent men, there can be no doubt. When we hear of transports delayed through drunken stokers, we ought to blame, not the men, but the system which, for the sake of cheapness in the past, regarded that quality of worker as good enough for the shipowners' purpose; and what the latter was, and is, the shipowners, even in a time of national peril, have not been ashamed to make clear in their freight charges, which were nothing else than the robbery of the public of its success coming from its investment in a supreme navy. So instinctively do many people think of affairs only in their relations to personal advantage —a habit in the Prussian which quite properly fills us with contempt—that even the fact that our Fleet had not sunk the German Navy did not unnerve them from

making hay, though, for all they knew, maybe only fifteen minutes of sunlight were left. They had always done it. They could not stop. They are doing it now, and while they fill the platforms at meetings of protest against the Prussian way of disregarding anything in the world but Prussian necessity, they have quite sufficient voice and indignation left to prevent our Government interfering with discredited economic laws in their natural work of undermining national loyalty and endurance in the war. Profit always has been more important than the human life from which it comes, and after a while, when one's youthful indignation against this blasphemy has worn itself out, one can regard with cynicism, which is not nearly so exhausting, the activities between the recruiting meetings and the business offices of the men hard at work in saving both their country and their bacon. What in us is thin and unfit now the nation is fighting for its existence is largely the product of healthy competition in the past.

The sudden condemnation of the disloyalty of the workers in restricting the output of munitions was perplexing, for one would have thought, seeing the war will be decided, as everybody knows and admits in some form or other, by the enthusiasm activity and endurance of working-folk, that a little more care than usual would have been shown in referring to their follies, particularly as working people, with a fair knowledge of the reasons for the high cost of living, were complaining already of those to whom the war seemed to be a great piece of good luck. It is remarkable, except to those interested enough to follow labour affairs closely, to what apparently purposeless extravagances of malice people will go who are accustomed to regard labour merely as a factor necessary to production. I remember how, during the last London dock strike, some newspapers were anxious to show how common was the brutal intimidation by the strikers of strike-breakers. Really, there was little of it, as the police and the hospitals were able to inform any inquirer who wanted merely the facts, and not support for a point of view. But these papers found writers who could discover the case they wanted, though they were men, I am personally aware, no more equipped to report

on the conditions of life and labour in Dockland than I am to outline Chinese literature. One may presume the readers of such papers believed the elaborated fable. I never heard that public indignation proved to the proprietors of the papers that cynical lying about an unfortunate body of our fellow-men would not be tolerated. The plain truth is that the docility of the port workers during that strike, the apathy with which they watched the port masters replacing their cheap labour with cheaper labour, the air of fatality with which they waited while their children died, the patience with which they submitted to every insult and every injury, was shocking to medical men and social workers among them, and also, I am glad to add, to some journalists who were well aware that women were being confined prematurely through hardships and anxiety, and that children at the breast were dying wholesale because their mothers were getting little nourishment.

But the war first. It is the initial task, the most urgent of labour problems. This democracy is attending to it with a single-minded intention altogether too successful for some people, who for some inscrutable reason would prefer to see the public dislike to do things, and be then compelled to do them. It was interesting, for instance, to observe how the old instinct of these people, even in war-time, responded with instant approval to a condemnation of the workers based on information supplied by a federation of employers; and how again, when the remedy suggested (it being still war-time) was as far-reaching as the closing of the traffic in drink (a traffic as sacred, being swollen with much invested capital, as even an economic law) they saw cunningly how they might secure for their own use that indignation of the workers they had helped to arouse by turning it against their political opponents. The behaviour of lambent patriotism, however, is often bewildering, and sometimes hardly distinguishable from rascality. We know from recent experience that we have influential men in the community whose minds, never more than unusually clever and untiring, have sickened in the leisure of their success into an incurable state which mistakes publicity for a capacity for public service, and who have before now careered us with thrills along the edge of national calamity. We have no

taste for those exercises to-day; the old vanities and malignities of party politics have somewhat the same effect on us now as the news we get from Berlin headquarters. We feel we want to strike it all impatiently out of the way. Any suggestion of rancour in the advice and criticism given to those who are attending to the main job for us, being an indication of division in our midst, is worse than deplorable; it amounts to a reason for internment. The sign of hardly-concealed satisfaction in the criticism of labour's output of munitions was to some of us as sickening as news of the loss of a battleship.

Then, you at once ask, Is there nothing in these charges brought against the workers? Yes; there is too much tippling, as there always was. There is even more now. You will find too much drinking even among officers and high officials. You cannot have war without its anarchical and demoralising effects. The fences are down. We may point to John Hampden, and Brown of Harper's Ferry, as the ideal fighters, but generally we shall behave as people always have in war-time. An engineer friend of mine, busy in superintending repairs to Admiralty craft and transports, recently began work one Saturday at 7 a.m., and went right on till 5 p.m. on Sunday, without any rest. His men worked with him. They were exposed to the rain on the deck of a ship in mid-stream, forced to cramped positions, and could use only dimmed lights. That was not a peculiar instance. They have been working so since last August. My friend has had not more than twelve days' rest in nine months; and I may add that his employers—not the Government—failing to recognise the significance of the work, still regard their men, who have surrendered themselves without reserve, in the old niggardly way, and cunningly contrive turns of the screw. Part of my friend's work, and not the least anxious part of it, is to keep his men reminded that their task is of more consequence than their annoyance with fool employers. And do you wonder that occasionally some of his men are missing through drink? Nothing is provided for them while they work for thirty hours exposed to the weather. Why should it be? It never was. They come ashore, in a state of collapse through fatigue, and with the knowledge that they will not get much rest before

the next urgent job is presented. The public-houses are there with the early morning rum and milk, a pleasant but certain poison; and the rest we know from crude statistics. The unintelligent way in which these men are handled is incredible, seeing how much now depends on them. They are willing enough. They know their responsibility in this affair pretty well; as well, at least, as journalists and politicians who have never had to hang on to a staging for a day and a half without rest, in sleet and snow, repairing the propeller of a ship which is required immediately for troops. Let us know what we are talking about before we criticise. Let us remember that the length of the sick-pay list of the engineers' trade union is now a serious anxiety to its officials, and that it is common for women workers on war material to faint before entering the yard-gates of a morning. This is not surprising when one knows of girls who, determined to bring their factory's output of ammunition up to a maximum in a given time, work twenty-two hours at a stretch, decorate their machines with Union Jacks in triumph; but faint next morning before starting afresh. The spirit of the English! On bread and tea, too! Nobody need worry about the spirit of the English. When two battleships came in for repair to a northern yard not long since, the men never ceased work on them till the vessels were in fighting trim again. There was a new battleship in the same district which was completed in five months under contract time; the district, it is worth remembering, from which the employers reported such a gross wastage of time by the workers. One could do anything with these folk, if one knew the way.

If the way were known! Instead of which with sombre piety we accept the evidence of such people as the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation as if it were an additional chapter to the gospel according to St. John; though it is the Germans we accuse of a lack of humour. I met one of those employers during the recent strike on the Clyde, where the men do drink too much, and where they are certainly argumentative when they doubt your intentions. A clever and likeable man, that employer, who put his case with the coolness, comprehensiveness, and balance of a Scots lawyer, till I felt inclined to believe anything he said. I pointed out to him at last that it was

a serious difficulty with the men that the relaxation of some of their trade union rules for the sake of speeding Government work had been used by the employers for the benefit of private contracts. The old Adam appeared in him instantly—the old antagonism towards those who thwarted him in making his profits just how he liked and be damned to them. He did not answer directly. He said inconsequentially, with some force, that if there had been no war there would have been a fight over those rules, and he would have made it. His men, of course, knew him better than I did, and they did not trust him. They would do anything for Lord Kitchener, without question; but all their trade union organisations are proof of what they expect as a matter of course from their usual employers. They don't trust their masters, though we are at war with Germany, and they never will. Our difficulty is that we are trying to work out a great communal ideal at last, but we are trying to do it with the machinery of the old competitive industrial system; and it won't work. It was never meant for the task we have in hand. We are producing now because of dire necessity, and not for profit; and private employers will be the last people to understand such a situation. They want us to win the war, of course, but they do not see why, when so much work is about, there should not be business as usual.

Now we cannot have business as usual. We cannot cure at once the usual evils of that business, but we can and must so mobilise our resources in life and material that the strength we have is directed with the least wastage in future. All Britishers have a common cause as long as Germany is undefeated. Our industrial army must be organised and handled with the same care and understanding as the armies in the field. Should this war continue for Lord Kitchener's period, nothing but ruin and exhaustion is before us if production is to remain in private hands; the unavoidable wastage will surely mean failure—wastage of time by workers who will not trust their employers even when working on munitions, and who will make more and more trouble as the controllers of prime necessities send up the cost of living; and a vast wastage of wealth produced as war profits, obviously the property of the nation,

which will have drained away down private channels. All this must be stopped. There is only one way to stop it. Nobody should be allowed more than their living when millions have surrendered the right to their lives. Profit out of the war is an abominable thing, and would never occur except to those whose minds have been debauched by the low morals of commercialism. Labour, foodstuffs, coal, all material essential to the success of the nation's adventure, ships, mines, railways, ship-yards, and work-shops, should be placed under direct control of the State, and the profits impounded for the war fund. There should be no war wages and bonuses, any more than war profits. The service of all should be expected, and nobody should be entitled to any more than a reasonable standard of life. Cheap labour and a cheap social morality, the unrestrained acquisitive instincts of the energetic and predatory, a Parliament which rarely did anything but protect the advantages of those already in the advantageous positions, and a church which indulgently kept righteousness within easy reach of busy people who wanted to conserve their energies for more important things, all those qualities and institutions which have made our country what it is, are of no use to us now. To win this war we want something better and more enduring than the intelligence of the market-place, the righteousness which thought it better for common humanity to be meek at heart and uncomplaining, and the activities which are divided because some people are unable to dissociate even the work of saving England from the idea of a profitable margin.

America at the Cross-Roads

By Sydney Brooks

On Friday, May 7th, the *Lusitania* was torpedoed with a loss of one hundred and thirty American lives. A week later the text of the Note addressed by the United States Government to Berlin was published in the papers. In the interval it had become clear that that detestable outrage, from the purely military standpoint an insignificant incident, was in reality one of the decisive events of the war. It renewed and deepened in the minds of all neutral nations the conviction that Germany's triumph would be the triumph of undiluted barbarism and the wreckage of the accepted securities of civilisation. Men had said that and felt it before; now they knew it. There was nothing in the sinking of the *Lusitania* that differentiated it except in degree from other episodes of Germany's warfare on passenger boats, merchant vessels, and fishing trawlers. It was not an additional and more or less accidental coup, but the culminating stroke of a fixed policy of indiscriminate assassination on the high seas. The fame of the vessel, however, the size of the death-roll, the known presence on board of several hundred non-combatant neutrals, and the melodramatic warnings that preceded the sailing of the boat from New York and that were justified against all expectation in the sequel, combined to extort a gasp of indignant horror from a world not yet by any means dead to pity or unmindful of the line between honourable warfare and sheer savagery. The entire non-German universe was instantly ranged in hope and sentiment on the side of the Allies. Men's eyes and thoughts turned with one accord to Washington for the clear voice and the commanding lead. Reluctantly, against the traditions of her past, and only under the compulsion of an inexorable sense of duty and necessity, the United States found herself on the very edge of a European con-

flict. American opinion, usually so spasmodic and hysterical in times of crisis, was hushed into a tense expectancy. For the first time in history it was left to the United States, or rather the obligation was thrust upon her, not only to uphold in whatever way seemed best her own honour and interests, but to come forward as the champion of international law, and to give unmistakable expression to the instincts of affronted civilisation.

The contingency in its main features can hardly have been unanticipated. The United States Government had promptly taken up the challenge of Germany's original declaration of war upon commerce in British waters. It had formally announced that if, by the act of the commander of any German war-vessel, an American ship or the lives of American citizens should be lost on the high seas, the United States "would be constrained to hold the Imperial Government of Germany to a strict accountability for such acts of their naval authorities, and to take any steps that might be necessary to safeguard American lives and property, and to secure to American citizens the full enjoyment of their acknowledged rights on the high seas." Germany had thus been plainly warned of the virtually inevitable consequences of her attempts to torpedo Great Britain into starvation. With the sinking of the *Lusitania* it devolved upon the United States to make the warning good. The circumstances were propitious to deliberate and pertinent action. The American people, while vehemently stirred, grasped at once the wisdom in so grave a crisis of leaving the guidance of events to the President. They were unanimous in demanding that the national self-respect should be asserted and vindicated. They desired, only a little less anxiously, that this might be achieved without war. They were prepared, however, to find it could not and to accept the alternative without shrinking. But the general hope undoubtedly was that Mr. Wilson's sagacity and highmindedness and moderation would be able to discover the means of attaining the first object without sacrificing the second. This war has had a very sobering effect on the American people. It has knocked almost all their old bellicosity out of them, and, except in response to some such overwhelming call as was made upon ourselves last August, they do not mean, if they can

possibly help it, to depart from their attitude of official neutrality. The Rooseveltian philosophy is anything but the prevailing temper of the American people just now; and their poise, the absence of all frothy jingoism, and the merciful chance that Congress was not in session, made President Wilson's task so much the easier. He has always been his own master since he entered the White House. He was never more so than when he sat down to frame his country's case against German "frightfulness."

The result was a Note not unentitled to rank among the masterpieces of diplomatic literature. Reading it one might almost picture the President as wrestling with the Wilhelmstrasse for the soul of Germany. It was both a subtle and an impassioned appeal to the better mind, the nobler sentiments and conduct of a once great people. It assumed that there must have been some hideous mistake, that no Government could deliberately instigate and sanction the crimes of which the German submarine commanders had been guilty, and that it was only necessary to remind the Kaiser and his advisers how absolutely these infamies were opposed to international law and the most elementary rules of "fairness, reason, justice, and humanity" for them to be promptly disavowed and their recurrence made impossible. The Note went far beyond the narrow lines of a merely national argument. It laid down fundamental principles of maritime warfare; applicable to the rights of belligerents and neutrals alike. It asserted as something indisputably beyond question "the rule that the lives of non-combatants, whether they be of neutral citizenship or citizens of one of the nations at war, cannot lawfully or rightfully be put in jeopardy by the capture or destruction of unarmed merchantmen." It upheld as equally axiomatic "the obligation to take the usual precaution of visit and search to ascertain whether a suspected merchantman is in fact of belligerent nationality or is in fact carrying contraband under a neutral flag"; and it brought home to the Germans that the American objection to their new method of attack was rooted in "the practical impossibility" of employing submarines in the destruction of commerce "without an inevitable violation of many sacred principles of justice and humanity." The Note wound up by making three demands upon Germany: first, that the acts com-

plained of should be disavowed; secondly, that reparation should be made "so far as reparation is possible for injuries which are without measure"; and thirdly, that immediate steps should be taken to prevent the recurrence of similar outrages. "Just, prompt and enlightened action in this vital matter" was looked for from the German authorities, and it was added, with studious restraint, that the Government of the United States could not be expected "to omit any word or any act necessary to the performance of its sacred duty of maintaining the rights of the United States and its citizens, and of safeguarding their free exercise and enjoyment." Given the situation it is difficult to see how it could have been met in a finer or firmer spirit.

Many misconceptions, personal as well as political, have, I hope, been removed, or at any rate, attenuated, by the publication of this Note. First there is the legend, based largely on his Mexican policy, and on one or two misleading, or at least unfortunate, expressions, that the President of the United States is a weak or ineffective personality, unfitted by his training and point of view for any masterful contact with realities. To those who know him that delusion has always seemed the quintessence of absurdity. When a cause presents itself that appeals to his conscience, nothing will move Mr. Wilson from fighting for it to the end. Those who have followed his career from the time he became the head of Princeton University take an unyielding combativeness in upholding and enforcing his convictions to be the very foundation of his character. He has given proof of this time and again since he entered politics. We in England ought not to have forgotten how he confronted many of the most powerful leaders in his own party and the general sentiment of the country in order to preserve the good faith of the United States in the matter of the Panama tolls. In domestic affairs his record is one of decisive and dominating directness. No President in American history has more emphatically ruled and not merely presided than he has. He has done it in his own quietly original and untheatrical way, with a minimum expenditure of heat and pugnacity, but with practically unvarying success. Since he has been in the White House there has never been any question as to where lay the

governing influence in American politics. Flabbiness is the very last quality that any of his countrymen would think of imputing to him. He has his own standards, his own unexpected ways of looking at things, and they are often at odds with the mad, unholy realities of the world around him. He sometimes detects a point of conscience in a situation which a more mundane statesman, without his fund of idealism and his painful balancing of ethical pros and cons, would tackle with a vulgar directness; and he retains from his pedagogic years a habit of authority, a stubborn pride of opinion, and a certain impatience of opposition that make it exceedingly difficult for him to reverse or depart from any policy which he has once persuaded himself possesses the essential sanctions of justice and right. He must be sure of the moral principle before he commits himself, but, once sure of it, he is inflexible. It would probably be literally true to say that he was "too proud to fight" Mexico. But he would not hesitate a moment to fight Germany when convinced in his conscience and intellect that there was no other way out and that he was contending for no selfish object but in defence of rights and interests as wide as humanity.

Another and in England a very common error that the Note should once and for all dispose of is that American policy is governed by a hard and commercialised self-interest, that the authorities at Washington are thinking all the time how they can make more dollars for their countrymen, and that the American people, who have, both as individuals and collectively, a capacity for exalted and even undisciplined idealism, equalling, and in many ways surpassing, that of any people on earth, are in truth nothing but a nation of money-grabbers. I am acquainted, of course, with the various acts of omission and commission from the beginning of the war that have angrily persuaded many Englishmen of the justice of this charge. They have been misled, I cannot help thinking, very largely by superficial appearances and contrasts, and especially by the contrast between the passivity of the United States in the presence of Belgium's long agony and of Germany's many other violations of the Hague conventions, and the seeming eagerness of Washington to take up diplomatic arms whenever the commercial interests of American manufacturers and exporters

were interfered with by the exercise of British sea-power. It is an open question whether the United States, in spite of her specific declaration that her signature to the Hague conventions was not to be taken as implying any departure from her established policy of non-interference in European affairs, should or should not have protested against the invasion of Belgium. The protest would have done no practical good of any kind; it would have been wholly inconsistent with neutrality; and its moral effect would have been little greater than the resolutions which the American Congress used to pass condemning British policy in Ireland and the Russian persecution of the Jews. As for the notion that it was the duty of the United States to inquire into and pronounce judgment upon the innumerable accusations of violating the rules of warfare that the Allies have brought against Germany and the Germans against the Allies, that, I think, may safely be dismissed as one of the many absurdities thrown off by the madness of war. Had President Wilson lent himself to any such procedure—*ex parte* evidence would of course have been insufficient—he would have to have heard all sides, and Europe at this moment would be perambulated by American commissions of inquiry investigating whatever charge any of the belligerents might think it worth while to hurl at any of the others.

The question, on the other hand, of contraband and commerce, rested from the first on an entirely different footing. There the United States and her citizens were directly interested and thoroughly entitled to make themselves heard; and I suppose there is no one in the British Empire who would pretend that our policy in these matters has not involved a certain straining of international law and offered legitimate ground for the protests of neutrals. Without exception the American protests have been mild in substance and courteous and even friendly in form, considerably more so, I imagine, than our own representations would have proved had the circumstances been reversed. Neutrals have rights, and it is very far from being a permanent British interest that they should be abrogated or overlooked. It is quite conceivable, indeed, that when the world works round to the task of rebuilding its code of international law, the American statements of neutral

rights may meet with something like general acceptance. To maintain the indefeasible interests, not only of American citizens but of all neutrals, and to convince the belligerent Powers of the completeness of his impartiality that he may the better serve the cause of peace hereafter, these would seem to be the objects which President Wilson has steadily pursued. When in pursuing them he has run counter to German interests we have been good enough to commend him. When he has run counter to our own, we have fallen into a mood of quite disproportionate bitterness, and into stupid misunderstandings of American policy and the American people. American policy is, if anything, rather less selfish and commercialised than that of other Governments, and the American people care very much less for money than we do. My judgment is, indeed, after twenty years of first-hand knowledge of the United States, that in no land is a leader who appeals to what is best and least material and most self-sacrificing in human nature more certain of a national response.

President Wilson, with an undivided country behind him, having raised this crucial issue with Germany, will not drop it until it is settled. There is some reason for thinking that the popular mind in the Fatherland is indifferent as to whether the United States stays out of the war or comes into it. More than one journal has argued that by exporting, and in ever-growing quantities, munitions and equipment of war to the Allies, the United States has already done Germany all the harm she possibly can, that the addition of her fleet would merely confirm the naval predominance of Germany's enemies, and that her army for purposes of European warfare is frankly negligible. But I doubt whether these are the views of the German authorities. They have, as a matter of fact, been at some pains since the sinking of the *Lusitania* to appease American anger. The policy foreshadowed in their original proclamation of a war-zone has been considerably modified. They have undertaken to discontinue submarine and aeroplane attacks upon neutral vessels, to deal with such vessels, even when they carry contraband, in accordance with the fixed principles of international law, and to assume responsibility for any mistakes that may occur. They have withdrawn the insultingly irregular advertisements

inserted by the German Embassy at Washington in the American papers, and they have ordered the recall of the immortally maladroit Herr Dernburg, whose departure from the United States is a heavy loss to the Allied cause. These concessions, of course, do not satisfy President Wilson's demand for the abandonment of submarine warfare on merchantmen or prevent the repetition of the *Lusitania* and *Falaba* incidents; but they may have a certain effect on American opinion. One may assume, too, that the Wilhelmstrasse will offer ample financial compensation for the American lives that have been lost, and will do so in perfect confidence that that is what the ordinary American citizen cares most about. But to give up at the behest of a neutral nation the device on which she has staked one knows not what extravagant hopes of the injury it is to inflict on her arch-enemy—that assuredly is more than Germany will contemplate even for a moment. She may, perhaps, as a mere diplomatic move, offer to abandon submarine attacks on shipping if we on our part agree to raise the "blockade" of Germany or if the Americans agree to stop their exports of war material to the Allies. She may offer to submit to arbitration every other issue that the *Lusitania* has stirred up between herself and the United States, but she will not in the meantime undertake to cease torpedoing any British vessels she can waylay, irrespective of the nationality of the passengers on board. She may seek to initiate a prolonged diplomatic debate over the propriety of neutral citizens travelling in hostile ships with contraband cargoes. But whether directly or by implication she is bound to reject the two main American proposals, that she disavow the acts of her submarine officers and that she will order them to discontinue similar practices in the future. She has, doubtless, taken note of the fact that the United States Government has not followed up its protest by any military preparations whatsoever; she is aware of the intense reluctance with which Mr. Wilson would draw the sword; her Ambassador in Washington must have informed her that in the American Cabinet there are pacifists even more pacific than the President, and that the American people will favour, will, indeed, almost jump at, any tolerable compromise that will avert war without

leaving too obvious a stain on the national dignity; and she may well hope, in these circumstances and with a very little skill, to escape from her present predicament without having yielded anything of value. On the other hand, the margin for compromise seems narrow; it is not easy to imagine the President retreating from a position he has once deliberately chosen; and it is even more difficult to think that the great bulk of the American people, in spite of the Germanic element among them and whatever individual politicians might do, would refuse to follow Mr. Wilson's lead. Moreover, it is only on the incredible supposition of Germany's complete abandonment of her present tactics that there can be any real assurance that the *Lusitania* and *Falaba* incidents will not be repeated and more American lives and more American property destroyed. On the whole, therefore, it seems a fair statement of the case to say that the chances of war and peace are pretty evenly matched.

There appears to be a wide persuasion among people in England that it is a matter of comparatively little concern to the Allies or ourselves whether the United States perseveres in or departs from her present neutrality. The arguments most commonly heard are that the American army and navy are organised on a scale far below the requirements of the present struggle, that the United States could therefore lend the Allies comparatively little effective assistance, that by giving our whole strength to it we can in the end beat Germany without American help by land or sea, and that so long as the United States remains neutral and is under no necessity to equip a large force of her own, and so long as British control of the sea enables the Allies to draw on the manufacturing resources of America while shutting them off from the enemy, we and our Allies really gain more by having the United States out of the struggle than we should by her armed intervention. To this it is added that her appearance as a belligerent would necessarily mean the shutting down of her magnificent work in Belgium and the end of the invaluable services—services that the representatives of no other Power could perform with equal authority and effect—she has rendered us in caring for our prisoners in enemy lands. But against these arguments, and largely

offsetting them, there are at least six cardinal considerations to be urged :—

(1) American naval and military strength, if relatively small in quantity, is of first-rate quality. The Allies have not such a superabundance of men or ships that half-a-dozen American vessels and a division of the United States army would not at this moment, and particularly in the Dardanelles, be a welcome addition. We cannot tell what may be our requirements or the state of our fortunes six months or a year from now. But we do know that in that time the United States could raise, train, and equip an army of almost any size she might determine upon, and that its rank and file would be composed of some of the finest fighting material in the world.

(2) The controversy between Great Britain and the United States over various aspects of our contraband policy is quiescent for the time being, but is very far from being at an end. There are some awkward possibilities still latent in it. The pressure put upon Mr. Wilson to repeat and amplify his former protests is far greater than most people in Great Britain appear to realise. The danger is not inconsiderable that this war may end with the conviction fixed in the American mind that, except on the score of humanity, our use of sea-power has been little more mindful of the rights of neutrals than Germany's. That danger, with its risks of an aftermath of irritating diplomatic disputes, would automatically disappear if the United States entered the war.

(3) It hardly needed Mr. Lloyd George's Budget speech or the daily spectacle of our efforts to make up for a lack of organisation and foresight by a frantic expenditure of money to convince the country that, wealthy as we are, it will be no easy task to shoulder the burdens of this war. Mr. Wilson hitherto has frowned on the floating of loans for any of the belligerent Powers in the United States. That inhibition would naturally be removed and the financial resources of one of the richest countries in the world would be placed at the disposal of the Allies if American neutrality became impossible.

(4) American manufactures are as little organised as were our own before the war. In the event of American intervention, the native supply, Governmental and private,

of munitions of war could, it is believed, be increased to something like tenfold its present figure, enough and more than enough to equip a large American army, and at the same time meet the requirements of the Allies even more adequately than at present.

(5) The United States as a belligerent Power would, of course, claim to be heard in the terms of peace. The virtual identity in the aims and, above all, in the spirit of British and American statesmanship would be a factor of the utmost moment in preserving, through the extremely difficult period of the peace negotiations, the same harmony among the Allies that they have shown in the conduct of the war.

(6) Beyond all this, and apart from its immediate effect on the remaining neutral States, the definite emergence of the United States as a working member of the family of nations, her alliance with Great Britain for no aggressive object, but in defence of the common interests of civilisation, and the fact that her men had fought side by side with ours, would be developments of transcendent value, not only to Anglo-American relations, but to the future of the whole world. It would be by all odds the biggest event of the war.

It only remains to add that the intervention of the United States, while of great, but not vital, value to the Allies, would prove of inestimable benefit to her own people. It would bring them into the main current of the world's affairs, vastly enlarge the national consciousness, endow them with the authority that can alone come from responsibilities met and discharged, and open up a sphere in which their happy union of practicality and idealism could labour with an otherwise unobtainable fruitfulness to ward off future wars and instil some sanity into the ordering of the universe.

National Service and Government

By Austin Harrison

Lord Haldane's recent pronouncement on the subject of conscription seems to suggest a growing tendency on the part of the authorities to reconsider the voluntary principle —I say authorities because I do not know who is responsible for determining our military requirements, the Government or Lord Kitchener. At any rate, the Lord Chancellor referred to the "tremendous necessity with which the nation is confronted," though he immediately afterwards qualified the words by affirming that "we are not face to face with that problem at present." This somewhat cryptic utterance has been interpreted in various ways, as probably it was intended to be, after the oracular manner of modern Governmental announcements drawn up rather with a view to appeal than from any strength of coherent Government. In peace that is the recognised style, dependent always upon popularity or the majority; unfortunately, we are to-day at war, in the eleventh month, in fact, of the greatest struggle that mankind has ever known, and at the hour of writing the enemy offensive has nowhere been broken.

When the war broke out opinion was general that the Russians would be in Vienna by October and would capture Berlin in time for Christmas. The Russian millions! They poured through England; millions of them were swarming over the Carpathians, pressing on the fleeing Hungarians: the Austro-German Empire was to be mopped up and re-mapped by mid-winter, and so universal were these complacent assumptions that the usual people came out with the usual protestations: "We don't want to harm the Germans," and we all started talking about the "last war" and the war that was "to end war."

Even serious military critics wrote in this strain, though I don't suppose they believed it. Their task was extremely difficult in the circumstances. The Press was shut down; a robust optimism was necessary; in those days the people who insisted upon a speedy victory at least contributed to

the nation's gaiety and to the optimism inherent in an island people ignorant of modern continental warfare and still more ignorant of the stupendous strength of the enemy.

All that was fairly natural. Russia has a huge population, and we have always fought on what has been called the theory of "limited activity," or area, which in plain language means that we count on others to do the fighting for us. It was so at Waterloo and during the whole Napoleonic wars. The Germans always counted on this restrictive fighting area of ours, as we did ourselves, maintaining but a small expeditionary army in these islands, which, as we know, when the crisis came, was actually half of what it was assured to be.

We can all recall the winter months, our hopes and prognostications. The Germans by January had definitely "lost the offensive." As they did not break through our lines we concluded they no longer had the power to lead, had either the men or the initiative. By means of fantastically arbitrary statistics we whittled away the German armies by some five millions, so that but groggy Landsturmers,* boys, and inefficients remained. Any day, men told one another, we or the French could break through. It was the dinner-table gossip. In February of this year the date of peace was everywhere decided to be June.

Germany was besieged; the German armies, east and west, were in a state of siege. The phrase caught on. It implied the loss of the German offensive, it signified certainty. In addition to these purely arbitrary assumptions we had a series of secondary reasons. Copper—the Germans had no copper. Hunger—the Germans were living on potato bread. Munitions and arms—the Germans were using rifles of the 'eighties pattern and half their shells failed to burst. Cotton—here the Government admitted that the Germans had so much cotton it hardly seemed any use to declare it contraband. And so on; the usual crop of war rumours, falsities, and delusions; and all the time there were the Russians lying, like a gigantic octopus, over the Hungarian plains, on the daily verge of

* Those who follow the German Press know that, as a fact, tens of thousands of Landsturmers have not yet been called up.

penetrating into the empire and so cutting off Austria from the support of Germany.

No need to recapitulate the vagaries of dead war rumours. I refer to them solely as an index of our underestimate of the enemy and as a guide to the present and the future, and here I think they deserve our most earnest attention.

All the talk about the want of copper, about starvation, about antiquated rifles, rotten shells, diseased Landsturmers, and puny boys* was mere talk, as even "Eye-Witness" would to-day fain admit. The war through the long winter months was not a siege war except as it applied to both sides, as the *Morning Post* long ago pointed out. Its stagnancy was climatic, inevitable, forced upon both lines equally—the German name *Stellungskrieg*, or positional warfare, is probably the most accurate description of it. Incidentally, it was a period of preparation for all belligerents; for during the wet winter months no side could have broken through with any hope of securing what soldiers style decisions.

If we turn to the Russians we find a similar problem in the higher strategic sense. Thrice the Russian armies were seriously defeated before the stagnation of winter positional warfare rendered open fighting impossible, with the result that they lay across the Carpathians threatening the Hungarian plains. But spring has come, and once more the conditions have changed. The German offensive in Galicia has resulted in another serious repulse to the Russian armies affecting their whole strategic position. Once more it is the Germans who have assumed the rigorous offensive, it is the Russians who have perforce retired. Our splendid Ally has lost enormous numbers of men. At the hour of writing, the siege of Austria-Hungary has got to be begun all over again; another grave check has been inflicted upon the Tsar's armies which it is mere folly on our part to ignore.

In the eleventh month of the war, therefore, the situation is this. On the East, the Russian attacking forces have been driven back; they have not yet been able to place the enemy on the defensive; it cannot be said with

* Of course there are boys; months ago all German schoolboys of sixteen were being drilled. There are lots of boys in our armies, too.

any show of truth that the invasion of the Germanic peoples has begun.

On the Western front the second phase of the war which opened from our side at Neuve Chapelle has led to the terrible fighting which started round Ypres and which will, in all probability, continue through the summer months. At the present moment only tactical successes on either side can be recorded, an advance here, a check there; meanwhile the Germans have officially proclaimed the annexation of Belgium, and still lie right across a considerable portion of France. More than that cannot be said. The battles continue, though the conditions and difficulties of the positional warfare remain, the lines being blocked at both ends by the sea and by Switzerland. The strategic situation, therefore, is far harder on the Western side, where positions can only be carried by frontal attacks and an inexhaustible expenditure of shells.

The Allies on the Western front have now five months of continuous battles before them in the best available climatic conditions. In the coming summer months the fiercest and greatest struggle in history will be fought out, a struggle which will strain the resources of all the Allies in men and material to their full strength. The silly notion that the Germans are "done," that they want peace and are disheartened, that they are ill-fed and ill-provided with arms, and that at the first determined onslaught they will crumple up and run—this we may as well at once dismiss. Such a *naïve* view of the war is in the highest degree offensive to our soldiers fighting there, as never before in all our history, for home and country. As we can all see, the Germans are terribly powerful, brave, and determined; above all, they are terribly well-equipped for the murderous technique of modern scientific war.

Such, in cold statement, is the situation. It seems to me utter madness to indulge in fervent platitudes at this crisis in the national life if we are to win—and we must win—the great war which is now beginning as a death struggle between our civilisation and that of Germany.

In this REVIEW the opinion was expressed last September that the war would probably last some years, and that the only way to fight it out to a successful conclusion was for us to introduce conscription. Personally, I hold that

to rely on Russia is a very dangerous expedient, besides being unheroic and unworthy of this race. We must remember that the Russians have now lost the flower of their active armies, an enormous number of officers, a fabulous number of prisoners. Russia's difficulties are many and serious. We are inclined to point to her millions and think that they are sufficient. That is not so. Numbers alone against modern weapons do not suffice. Astonishing as the Russian *moral* undoubtedly is, magnificent as the Russian soldiery are, they, too, have seriously suffered as an offensive fighting force. The idea that all we have to do is to hold the line in France until the Russians burst through is to form a false estimate of the German resisting power, though, of course, this is only a personal opinion. None the less, it is a deliberate one, based upon years of careful study of Germany and the German people. For a war of this kind, now admitted on all sides to be a war of attrition and exhaustion—military, economic, and political—the Germans are by no means so badly constituted as many of us would seem to imagine. They have prepared for it; they are prepared for it. Moreover, they have no secondary interests to impair the unity of their strength. In Germany all is military; the whole Austro-German Empire is to-day a giant fabric and nursery of war, producing and fighting as one single machine concentrated upon the purpose in view. As Frederick the Great fought all Europe for seven years, so conceivably may the German peoples to-day. Those who count upon a *débâcle* are ignorant of Germany. It is for us now to assume the offensive. Hideous battles must be fought, hideous losses must be faced, hideous sacrifices endured.

To me it is incredible that after the battle of the Marne we did not at once take steps to organise and prepare for national service and turn the whole country into a machine for the prosecution of war. We did not because of a principle—the principle of voluntary effort. Only gradually we got to see that our production of munitions was ludicrously inefficient for the purpose. We were taken by surprise, just as we were surprised that the Russians failed to take Berlin by Christmas, that the Germans are still in France, that the Germans resumed the offensive at Ypres, or that they are fighting

like savages on sea and on land. We are always surprised. I fear we shall be very much more surprised before the end is in sight.

In the tenth month of the war the Government falls owing to the discovery that we are lamentably short of high-explosive shells. What does this mean? After ten months of fighting! The authorities are apparently satisfied with the number of men enlisted; at the same time, the Government spends huge sums of the public's money advertising for men. Why? If we have enough men, why advertise? [We ought to save; the Chancellor has advised us to save.] If not, why does Lord Haldane say that we are not "face to face" with the problem? I do not understand. These are not the times for juridical sophistication. Either we want the men or we don't.*

I think we shall need the men, perhaps even another two millions.

As it is, our voluntary principle has degenerated into a blistering spate of irresponsible confusion. Men say—and that is the chief argument against conscription—"we don't want compulsion"; and then there is the other argument that conscripted soldiers don't fight as well as voluntary soldiers.

Let us examine these arguments. The question as to what we want or like is neither here nor there; the question is, What numbers may we need? It is thus a contest between preference and necessity; but to dispute as to which consideration should prevail in a world-war is scarcely a serious proposition, and, personally, I cannot understand its formulation. The second argument is demonstrably false.

We say conscripted men don't fight well. All I can say is that our Navy was always conscripted up to recent times. It was the press-gang which provided Nelson with his men, and they were good enough for all our enemies. The French armies are conscripted—are they not fighting mag-

* Lord Kitchener has now asked for another 300,000 men, raising the age to forty, while thousands of young and unmarried men stay behind.

It pleases us to assume that Germany is already fighting her last man. Two days ago I read in the German Press that five lads between nineteen and twenty-one had been sentenced for the violation of a girl of fourteen. None of these lads had been called up. Such violations are extremely common in Germany.

nificently? The German armies are conscripted—if they are so inferior, why is it our volunteers cannot drive these unwilling Germans out of Belgium?

The truth is, the argument is utterly specious and of purely political origin. It derives from our traditional theory of war on a limited area, due again to our insular security. To-day it has no sort of military application. We have got to fight and smash the Germans or go down. To say that the conscripted armies of Germany are not fighting well is to cast a slur on our own military efforts.

What we have now is a thoroughly indecent, uneconomic, and ignoble form of enlistment by persecution, with all its attendant and inevitable wastage. Married men go, die, and thereby cast their families upon the care of the State. Skilled and indispensable men enlist, while shirkers and young men stay behind. The whole question is treated as a new game of heroics: there is no system, men don't know what to do; for months and months we have gone on thus mobilising like amateurs and all for the sake of a political principle which every sane man knows is as dead to-day as the Dodo.

It is to the national side of the matter I would call attention. Conscription does not mean merely a law introducing compulsory service; it means militarism, military government and control, system, organisation, all-round professionalism, in lieu of the amateurishness still reigning. Under conscription the whole forces and resources of the country would be placed in the hands of the military. Our popular Government would cease to be, for the time being; that is to say, their responsibilities would cease. Politicians would no longer be in control of any work or department connected with war. The question of food prices, of freights, etc., would come under the jurisdiction of military expediency regardless of the wishes, theories, opinions, or singularities of an individualistic electorate. If men drank too much, the drink shops would be shut down. If prices rose excessively, the authorities would step in and fix a maximum, as they have done all over Germany. In a word, we should have system, and for the first time since Cromwell—Government in contradistinction to *a* Government whose whole strength derives from the initiative and consent of the people.

I do not pretend to know—no one knows anything—whether this political aspect of conscription influences the attitude of the Government towards its introduction, but since we are still living on the old voluntary principle I am perfectly justified, therefore, in expressing an opinion which under a military *régime* I could not do. And it is that, whatever his reasons may be, Lord Haldane's assertion that we are not "face to face" with the problem seems to me inadequate and unsatisfactory. We are to-day midway in the greatest crisis that we have ever been called upon to face. It is not that the Germans can now win—I think that hour of danger passed with the battle of the Marne. Money, sea-power, moral forces—in a word, civilisation, battles to-day with us directly and indirectly, and the longer the war endures the greater will the forces of the Allies necessarily grow. It is not a question of defeat, then, but it is a question of victory; whether, if the Germans cannot now win, we and our Allies can.

The great danger of the war is stalemate, the inability of either the Allies or the Germans to bring about absolute decisions. Eventually, no doubt, the Germans could be forced economically to their knees, but that is a process of exhaustion which might take three or four years. The only other way is to defeat their armies on the field, to drive them back into their own territories and there literally to reduce them by violence. The numbers of Frenchmen are limited; another winter campaign with its decimating ravages and the French, too, will be weakened—weakened, that is, for a great offensive effort. On the other side, there are the Russian millions; but numbers alone are not sufficient.

Of course, there are other factors. The forcing of the Dardanelles is unquestionably the key to the present deadlock, both politically and militarily. It is of the utmost military, political, and economic importance to push through the Narrows and so open the route to the Black Sea. The defeat and elimination of Turkey from the struggle would add vastly to the fighting strength of Russia and must reverberate in our favour upon all the Balkan peoples. So much is self-evident. A beaten Turkey, and Roumania would inevitably have to take her part in the fighting, as in all probability would Bulgaria. The Dar-

danelles expedition is thus of the greatest strategic importance; it is also of the greatest importance economically, both to Russia and ourselves. Much will depend on it. An early success in those parts, and the first decisive blow will have fallen upon the Germans, from which there could be no recovery. But the operations may take a long time, a long, long time, as the song goes. It will be well not to reckon with speedy results on the peninsula. Months may go by before the first British battleship appears before the Golden Horn.

Other things may happen to hasten the desired end. Italy will probably be fighting on our side by the time these lines are published, and that, too, would be greatly to our advantage. I will say no more about Italy's intervention. Yet here, again, I would utter a warning, and it is not to regard Italian intervention as a necessarily decisive factor.

Italy would give us a fine new army, men and ships, but to break through the mountain defence into Austria is a task of enormous difficulty. We must remember that. Italy's intervention should in no way lead us to relax our efforts or to imagine that the requisite strength has thus been provided. We said that eight months ago about Russia. Let us not fall into the same complacent error again and rely now upon Italy. It would be a great mistake, it might even be a fatal mistake.*

Viewing the struggle as a whole we may rightly claim that all the latent forces of war stand with us, and all the probabilities that, as time goes on, other neutral Powers may join in the fray, in which connection even America may be regarded as a potential Ally. These things are not certainties, however; the certainty of war is its uncertainty. The wise general dispenses with Providence on the field. He takes all his dispositions, provides for every eventuality. Confident as we may be about the ultimate result, it is as yet premature to speak of victory. All that we can say is that the enemy is stirring up the animosity of the world and is thereby digging her own grave. Tactical gains here or there amount to little in a

* Germany with Austria-Hungary can certainly fight on a full strength of 12,000,000 men, trained and armed, fighting under one single direction and organisation; added to which she has the Turkish Armies. They may in the last instance organise women corps.

war of this kind, and the same applies to all belligerents. There are no decisions and so no results. In a war of this Titanic nature there can only be one end—complete exhaustion on the part of one or other of the contestants by the application of overwhelmingly superior force.

The question is not, Can Germany smash us? but Shall we *smash* Germany? which is the only way now to secure peace and the safety of Western Europe. When a Cabinet Minister publicly states that he does not think the time has arrived for Britain to fight at full strength, *i.e.*, with conscription, I confess I feel staggered. The statement can only have one meaning, namely, that we are counting upon others to do the fighting. I fail utterly to understand such an attitude, which is presumably that of those who are responsible.

Everything that we own is at stake. The whole of Belgium is in the power of the Germans. The French are fighting on their own soil for their very homes. The Russians have failed yet a fourth time to pierce the German lines. And we talk of not being "face to face" with the problem!

Not face to face! I know this. The war is going to decide our fate in the world. If we cannot turn the Germans out of Belgium, war will continue indefinitely between this country and Germany, even if France should make peace and Russia retire from hostilities. The problem concerns every man and woman in these islands as no problem since the days of the Armada. All—literally all—depends upon our power to roll back the Germans and crush them as a military nation. Our enemy is as yet unbeaten, confident and very palpably horribly efficient and powerful, and their final end is England. All the hatred of 67 million Germans is concentrated upon us debating here smugly in our homes on the merits of voluntary service. Voluntary service denotes limited service. And still we ponder and discuss and say that conscripted men cannot fight, while every interest in our Empire hangs on the result of our co-operative effort to beat back the invading Huns—talking, still theorising as if the Kaiser had merely presented us with another domestic problem to contest upon the hustings. Almost it makes me feel we do not deserve to win.

It is not the fault of the people that we have not got conscription: it is the fault of those who hide the truth from the people and minister to their prejudices. I cannot believe there is any member of the Cabinet to-day who honestly thinks that the military situation is so good that there is no cause for anxiety. If there is anxiety of any sort there must be a problem. There is a problem. *We are face to face with it.* And I say unhesitatingly that if we continue evading instead of solving it the consequences may yet be most serious and even disastrous.

We ought now to start right away with conscription, which would turn the whole country into an organising military machine. Every man of a fighting age should be allotted his place; the entire energies of Britain should be organised for the conduct of war. If Italy comes in so much the better. If we force the Narrows by August so much the better. If the Germans sink the *Mauretania* and America comes in so much the better. But don't let us count on these adventitious aids and side-issues. Our business is to destroy the Huns. The more who help the quicker that work of civilisation will be done. But in the eleventh month of the war we are still only preparing to do it. Strange dislocations of power may yet take place. So far we have only succeeded in holding the German line. We have got to break it. I believe our soldiers are the only men who will break it decisively, but if we don't provide the necessary men and the necessary amount of shells, we may, in another year's time, still be discussing the "problem," whether there is a problem or not and whether we are yet "face to face" with it.

For wait and see in this war may land us with another problem—the problem, too late.

Since the above was written the Government have fallen, to give way to a Coalition. Their fall was inevitable from the first as the logical result of the censorship.* A war like this, in comparison with which the Napoleonic struggle was insignificant, cannot be fought on the democratic or casual basis; by a Government not elected for the

* Because the Censorship by stifling criticism led to an utterly false optimism, and the moment opinion broke loose Party recrimination immediately played its disintegrating part, as has been only too palpable in the Press commentary on the reconstitution of the Government.

purpose in hand, traditionally and morbidly dependent on the vote or popularity. It was obvious from the outset that a Government, who individually and collectively were wrong, because ignorant, about Germany, could not be expected to understand and deal with the business of a European war, having neither been trained for the job nor possessing the competency to meet it.

Muddle after muddle has occurred, as was inevitable. The Government have done their best, but they were conspicuously lacking in the true qualities essential for the conduct of a death struggle—business training and foresight, unconquerable firmness, and imagination. All the time they have been "behind," as they were before the war. Always they have been "surprised." And they have shown an incomprehensible weakness and even inability to grasp the dangers and requirements of the situation.

A Coalition Government means concession; all the same it must, in the circumstances, be welcomed. This is not a Party question in the least. The danger lies in patchwork. If, as seems more than likely, the new and National Government is composed merely of politicians, the change will be a compromise, which may, owing to the weakening of the Opposition and so of criticism—from which the spirit of England is drawn—lead even to a confusion worse confounded.

Certain obvious weaknesses the new Government will rectify. The Navy will be run by sailors, the Army will be run by soldiers. That is as it should be, but it is not enough.

The need of the country is of *Government.** Not a Government of politicians elected for their oratorical gifts or legal abilities, but of men each one of whom has been selected because of some special qualification regardless of Party, birth, privilege, or political claims. What we really want is a National Emergency Council. I should like to see such a Council formed of a few politicians representing both sides and the rest made up of carefully chosen business men, some of the great newspaper proprietors, the managers, say, of Harrods, Whiteleys, with

* The recent newspaper squabbling is really a healthy sign, because a sign of the changes necessary. We have got to drop our *Ideas* for national unity and organisation. And this will be the business of the Coalition. But the new Government will never obtain the authority necessary in our democratic country unless it constitutes itself a true National Government on the basis of National Service.

Mr. Lloyd George, and some of those dour men from the North. Their business would be to organise the country as a war-producing machine, to control prices, to systematise the social, industrial, and economic life, to set to work *on business lines* without the smallest regard to interest, opinion, precedent, or popularity.

We are still striking—if prices rise we shall go on striking. Only yesterday we found imagination enough to stop the indecency of racing. Profits extraordinary are plentiful. The people had to riot to make the Government realise the national earnestness in connection with the aliens. And still our factories are not systematised for the production of munitions of war. And still the casual or voluntary method obtains, as if the war was merely a variety of American football.

All this must change. Everywhere opinion, dissent, Party grumbling,* coupled with an ignorant optimism, impede our singleness of effort. In Germany every shop is turning out munitions of war. Every man knows his post. Every boy is being drilled. Maximum prices have been fixed on all foodstuffs. All over the Empire the women are cultivating potatoes, cabbages. Nothing is left to casual effort. Their harvest will be got in by the prisoners. Their socialists are making airships and aeroplanes, submarines, shells, rifles, etc. Germany is preparing to fight on for years and to the last ditch. The whole energies of Germany and Austria-Hungary are working at the Front or for the Front.

The change in our Government is a right move. It should succeed, but it will not unless the growing fission and confusion are removed, and the Government, throwing off all political amateurishness, set to work to organise and apply the whole resources of this country in men and material for the business of war—the war which consists not in appealing to casual effort and enterprise, but in raising and maintaining the violence necessary to defeat and crush down for ever the most powerful military organisation that the world has ever known and the most ruthless and sinister civilisation.

* Conscription is still treated on Party lines. *The Nation* (May 15th), in a violent polemic against national service, ended thus: "We warn all and sundry against the supreme danger and folly of such an experiment. It would certainly fail. *It would almost certainly imply grave national trouble, and might even involve the loss of the war.*" Party partisanship has never gone further in times of an election.

Books

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE

THE LITTLE MAN AND OTHER SATIRES. By JOHN GALSWORTHY. Heinemann. 6*s*.

In one of these studies, that of the artist, the author dwells on the "splendid vacuity" demanded of art, and the idea seems to sum up the atmosphere of the volume. It is, of course, a point of view; it is presumably Mr. Galsworthy's point of view, and accounts for what must fain be called the "new Galsworthy," the sentimentalist who has really gone a bit cranky on the subject of animals. The artist has to be objective, but all great art is the result of passion, of love, of emotion, of the blood; rarely, if ever, of the intellect alone. The definition of art is creation or love, vacuity is its negation, because it signifies merely presentation. That is where these satirical cameos appear to fail. They lack blood and bone, there is no heat or moisture or smell in them. And this is not satire which may be called corrected passion. Needless to say, they are admirable in point of expression; unfortunately, the vacuity of their inspiration leaves also a vacuity.

SEA PIE. By J. E. PATTERSON. Max Goschen. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

In his preface Mr. Patterson asks us to "take such stupendous inspirations as the Bible, the Zend Avesta, and Shakespeare" as proofs of the inconsistencies of the ego; and goes on to argue, if we get his meaning right, that the ego of a story-teller is often so difficult to control that he may be looking rather ridiculous to his audience while under the distinct impression that his beautiful eyes are as successful as ever. It is hard to see why the Zend Avesta should be in a sea pie; though, as the author explains, one may find anything in that dish, even cods' heads. After going over his preface twice, to be sure we got the trend of it, we believe, perhaps wrongly, that Mr. Patterson wants us to understand that the ingredients of his pie were issued to him by other men; he has been collecting them

for some time; and now is only responsible as the cook. We accept that, yet feel bound to tell him that we think we detect the savour of cod somewhere—we are, at a second sniff, definitely assured that one or more of his donors worked off one of those stale heads on him; a low trick. But, as he knows, these rough sailors will have their little jokes. Yet such a penetrating suspicion spoils the whole confection to us, and we . . . we pass. Take that helping of the pie where his informant, the mate of a ship, is allowed by the captain's wife to kiss her when she visits the vessel, and asks him in strict confidence to be sure and bring back the corpse should the old 'un die on the voyage. We know in some narratives it would be easily possible for the captain's wife to be such an entertaining lady. But Mr. Patterson's sailor, in telling the story, talks so like an actor doing a nautical turn at the Surrey that we strongly suspect he is the party responsible for that strong premonition of old cod.

ACCIDENTALS. By HELEN MACKAY. Melrose. 5*s*.

These prose poems and character sketches are the product of a mind sensitive and alert. Mrs. Mackay knows her Paris; she is jealously observant of its mankind and nature, of its *genius loci*; she can write. They are not exactly tinged with melancholy, these Parisian studies; they are pensive, refined; a bland pantheism hovers about them, a sense of wistfulness and autumnal moods. Admirable little vignettes, and presented in language of a haunting charm.

INDEX TO PERIODICALS. By A. CECIL PIPER. Vol. I. April—September, 1914. Stanley Paul. 21*s*.

It is perfectly true that a very great need has existed for an Index of this nature, and we can heartily recommend this venture. The arrangement strikes us as wholly satisfactory; it has obviously entailed an infinity of work, and the results are all that they should be.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

THE PLACE-NAMES OF ENGLAND AND WALES. By the REV. J. B. JOHNSTON. Murray. 15*s*.

It is impossible to do any kind of justice to a book like this in the space at our disposal. But we feel it

our duty to call our readers' attention to its existence, begging them to see for themselves what a wealth of quaint material Mr. Johnston has brought together from the byways of history and topography. The lore of place-names is a fascinating study—everyone is interested in it; and we venture to hope that henceforward no country house will be considered "complete" unless a copy of this volume is to be found on its shelves.

A Short History of Freethought. By John M. Robertson. Third Edition. Two Vols. Watts and Co. 10*s.* net.

We cannot resist the temptation of congratulating both author and publisher on the third edition of this fine work. Readers of the English Review will place it beside their Buckle and Gibbon—it has many qualities in common with them, notably the diligence displayed in amassing material and grouping it so as to gain the maximum of cumulative force. One might say much of Mr. Robertson's lucid method of exposition, of his painstaking research and scrupulous honesty; but the characteristic feature of this work—the main impression it leaves on us—is precisely that sense of harmonious onward movement and driving power, that feeling of momentum which can be generated in the mind of a reader only when the author has complete grip of his subject, when he possesses his facts and remains unpossessed by them. Here, then, we have a record of the labours of those who have refused to *acquiesce in the incredible*, who have fought, and suffered, to make mankind appreciate—what? The value of evidence; nothing more. That is the history of Freethought: to trace the painful birth and the painful growth of the spirit of truthfulness. A blood-drenched history! One would think that truth, fair truth, would be welcomed and respected whenever encountered. Well, these pages will prove how correct is old Bacon's saying that "mankind is possessed of a natural but corrupt love of the lie itself." But they prove more than this. They prove that the acquiescent mood, the cult of unreason, is on the wane—and this is what makes Mr. Robertson's book so essentially inspiriting to read. It is not only a plea for candour and cleanliness of the mind. It brings us face to face with this significant fact—that the pursuit of truth, once useless and even

dangerous, has at last been discovered, or re-discovered, to be profitable to the human race, and that to acquiesce in demonstrable non-truth is becoming (to use no stronger word) unfashionable. This is a good sign. For in the *usefulness of truth* lies the hope of humanity.

SOCIAL

DIVORCE AS IT MIGHT BE. By E. S. P. HAYNES. Heffer and Sons. 2*s.* net.

When we at last obtain the reform of our obsolete Divorce Laws the name of Mr. E. S. P. Haynes will be honourably associated with that most desirable consummation. In this little book he continues his work of enlightenment, judicial criticism, and straightforward propaganda always with good temper and that lucidity of expression which comes from clear thought. Even those who wildly disagree will find nothing but sound argument in this volume, which we trust men and women will read and themselves think carefully upon as apart from the ecclesiastical traditions in which the subject is shrouded and clamped.

WAR

HEROIC FRANCE. By ANNA BOWMAN DODD. New York: Poon's Manual Company. 1915. 1 dollar.

We hear so much in the Press of the British heroes in France that it is most opportune to have a handy book by an American resident in France to tell us of what the French are doing in their own tremendous struggle for their country's life. I recommend everyone to get *Heroic France*.

This excellent little book, by a most accomplished writer who owns a property in Normandy and has long been intimate with French writers and politicians, gives, for the first time to an English reader, a coherent, lucid, and convincing account of "how Lille was lost," and "how Paris was saved."

This reasonable and authoritative narrative clears up the terrible story of the war from mid-August to mid-September, and seems to explain the cause of our disasters and the source of many rumours and legends. Mrs. Dodd was among the French and the British troops in the crises,

and, as a well-known American residing in Northern France, she had information and experiences from which our Press was excluded. I have often asked politicians and soldiers from the Front: "Why did von Kluck turn east in September?" To this I have only received quite general answers which really explained nothing. If Mrs. Bowman Dodd is right, von Kluck did what a competent general would do under the force of pressure; and this book explains in detail what the pressure was, and also why French, too, had to retreat in August.

But perhaps the most interesting part of the book is the life-like picture of "Heroic France" when war was declared and the new spirit of unity and patriotism which so amazed the Huns and disconcerted all their schemes. And one of the most instructive chapters is that on "The German Fort near Caen"—a real entrenched and dominant camp, with casemates and concrete foundations, built in time of peace by a bogus manufacturing company, but designed for cannon, and owned and constructed by Krupp under a false name. Here a foreign eye-witness watched the construction in years of peace of an official German fortress in a neighbour's country, which was to be seized and mounted with big guns so as to dominate Normandy and the lower Seine.

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